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The Week

THE famous secret naval agreement between Great Britain and France is a secret no longer. The Hearst newspapers somehow managed to get hold of, and publish, a letter, copies of which were sent by the French Foreign Office to several of the embassies on August 3, giving them an outline of its terms. These correspond to the reports which were already in circulation. The two powers have agreed that at future meetings of the League's Preparatory Commission on Limitation of Armament, they will urge that limitation be applied only to capital ships and aeroplane carriers of more than 10,000 tons; cruisers of 10,000 tons or more, armed with guns of six to eight inches, and to submarines of more than 600 tons. Put in another way, the purpose sought to be achieved by this accord would be that Great Britain, which wants to build small cruisers, may construct all she wishes; that France, which wants to build small submarines, may do the same; but that the United States, which wants to build only large cruisers, will be limited. As our readers know, the American naval authorities insist that we must build large cruisers because we have so few naval bases that a wide cruising radius is imperative. They say these vessels must be armed with 8-inch guns because our merchant fleet is so much smaller than that of Great Britain that in wartime we should be hopelessly outclassed as to auxiliary craft.

THERE is nothing new in all this; it was precisely because of these opposing policies that the Geneva Conference of last year broke down. At that time, France agreed with the American policy of determining global tonnage and leaving the distribution within the total to each power. She has now gone over to the British point of view, presumably because in return Great Britain has agreed not to regard her conscripted men who have had one year's military training as being technically reserves. Some European observers insist that there is a much more comprehensive understanding between the two countries, one which has not been reduced to writing but amounts virtually to a new Entente. Whether this is so or not, the naval agreement as it stands has done grave damage and is likely to do more unless it is promptly dropped. It has blown a chill wind of distrust over Anglo-American relations at the moment when it was hoped that the Kellogg treaty would have an opposite effect. It has heartened the big-navy men in the United States as they have not been heartened in years—in fact, not since the Washington Conference of 1921. They expect to get their sixteen-ship program through the next session of Congress and perhaps to be able to expand it.

IT IS not enough for the French and British spokesmen to insist that objection by the United States or any other power, at the next meeting of the Preparatory Commission, will result in the withdrawal of the agreement; President Coolidge has already indicated that if the compact has not been dropped by the time the date for that meeting has come, the United States probably will send no delegation. It would certainly be better to postpone the meeting indefinitely than to go through another failure like that at Geneva last year. The Baldwin government appears to have made the mistake which modern

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governments are always making. As long as there is good will between Great Britain and the United States, the exact size and character of the two navies are of no importance. Why, then, jeopardize the good will for the sake of the technical advantage? It is only fair to add that we feel the same criticism applies in general to American policy.

IN MOST great disasters the early reports of damage turn out to be exaggerations; but this has not been the case with the recent West Indian hurricane. It was at first thought that in Florida only forty to fifty persons had been killed, but careful estimates as we go to press indicate that the number is at least 1,000 and may be twice as high. To this total must be added fully a thousand more who died on the various islands in the path of the storm. In all the devastated regions there is serious danger that disease will add to this toll; in Porto Rico, where at least three hundred thousand persons were rendered homeless and the island's economic machinery is at a standstill, a virulent outbreak of influenza has begun. The property loss will run into hundreds of millions of dollars. Both in Porto Rico and Florida, thousands of persons who would otherwise starve are being fed by the Red Cross. In prosperous Palm Beach County, Florida, for example, 8,000 persons are absolutely destitute, and the property loss is estimated at not less than $20,000,000. The Red Cross has instituted a special campaign for funds and will need every cent it can get; and, as always in these emergencies, "he gives twice who gives quickly."

THE German reactionaries have chosen the best moment, from their own point of view, to propose a return to the monarchy. Germany is frightened over the Anglo-French naval accord; she is downcast because of Briand's recent speech, which sounded so much more like Poincaré than himself; she fears that the price she will have to pay for getting the troops out of the Rhineland and a final settlement of reparations may be heavier than she can bear. Nevertheless, there seems not the slightest chance that the Steel Helmets and their allies would be able to win a favorable verdict at the polls, even if they could get a sufficient number of supporters to justify a referendum. Germany would fare so much worse if she changed her government that even the anti-republicans would think twice before countenancing such a move.

ON the whole, Governor Smith's Western tour seems to be a success. It is easy, of course, to overestimate the effect of this sort of barnstorming; the crowds which stand along the curb and cheer do not necessarily intend to express the same approval at the ballot box, and it is doubtful whether many of those who come to public meetings change their minds as a result of what they hear. Nevertheless, the Governor has certainly advanced his candidacy by letting himself be seen in those parts of the country where he was little known. Whatever else the West may now think of him, it must at least concede his bravery. His attack on the Klan in such a stronghold of the order as Oklahoma City again revealed his political audacity, as did his discussion of the Catholic issue and of the charges of inebriety which have been made against him. If courage and candor were the decisive elements in the campaign, Smith would win by a Coolidge-size majority.

GOVERNOR SMITH'S Omaha, Denver and Helena speeches will undoubtedly swing to him many votes among progressives who voted for La Follette in 1924. He said nothing which he had not said before, and the charge of political expediency cannot fairly be made against him; but the vigor and decisiveness with which he expressed himself on farm relief, the power question and Republican responsibility for the oil scandals has undoubtedly served to emphasize this aspect of his campaign to many Middle Westerners who have heretofore thought of it in terms of prohibition, Catholicism and Tammany. While Governor Smith may find that he is unable to win, even with progressive votes, he certainly cannot win without them. For this reason there is much significance in the fact that Senator Blaine of Wisconsin, one of the wheel-horses of the La Follette organization, has issued a public statement that he will not vote for Mr. Hoover. While he has not yet added that he will vote for Smith, he says that "most of my friends and supporters" will undoubtedly do so. Senator La Follette has also indicated that he will not aid Hoover. This almost certainly means that Wisconsin will go Democratic, and her thirteen electoral votes may be of crucial importance in determining the election result.

SENATOR NORRIS has broken his silence regarding the presidential campaign, in order to praise Governor Smith's speeches on farm relief and water power. The former he regards as "wholly satisfactory," and he feels that "there is no comparison between the views of Hoover and Smith on water power," which, moreover, he considers "the most important [issue] of all, in that it affects every man, woman and child in the country." Senator Norris does not say that he will vote for Smith; he is about to start a stump speaking campaign to help ensure the reëlection of seven progressives to the Senate, of whom four are Republican, two Democratic and one a Farmer-Laborite, and for obvious reasons, he will not discuss the national tickets on his tour. Senator Norris is a progressive first, and a Republican only in the merest technical sense. Whether he will find himself able to come out for Smith after he has done what he can for his seven colleagues remains to be seen:

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he cannot and should not do anything which would endanger his right to his highly important committee memberships in the Senate; but whatever course he pursues, those progressives throughout the country who value his counsel more than that of any other single individual in public life will find in his statement this week a clear indication of the way their own votes ought to go.

A PERPLEXED teacher in Hamilton, Ohio, has written to the New Republic saying that a pamphlet called "Aladdins of Industry," undoubtedly part of the private utilities' propaganda, has found its way into the schools of that city, where the school authorities seem to have been too preoccupied with outside matters and too casual to have recognized it as such. What material can we suggest, she asks, that would give a fair view of the power question to grade-school pupils? We can suggest none, because the defenders of the public in this matter have had neither the means nor the inclination to introduce counter-propaganda into the schools. Clearly something ought to be done, however. We are reminded that, although the last convention of the National Education Association voted that a committee be appointed to investigate propaganda in the schools, and the secretary has fulminated against the utilities in this connection, no committee has yet been appointed. Why not appoint one of distinguished and public-spirited educators of the type of Dr. John Dewey? And why could not such a committee supervise the issuance of material, bearing the imprint of the Association, which by presenting the issue adequately could undo the harm already effected by the propaganda of private interests? Surely those in charge of the public schools need to take active measures to defend their integrity against the vicious attack to which it has been subjected by the power lobby.

THE emphasis placed by many of the Protestant church authorities on support of prohibition in the present campaign tends to convey the impression that these Churches care little about issues of public morality or public welfare except the dubious one of attempting to enforce by law a standard of private habits which cannot be brought about by moral and spiritual leadership. We are glad to see an evidence, however, that there is still room in the Protestant mind for something else. In "Social Trends," published by the Board of Temperance and Social Welfare of the Church of Christ (Disciples) there is an excellent review of two important books on the power issue—Ernest Greenwood's "Aladdin, U. S. A.," on the side of the private utilities, and Raushenbush and Laidler's "Power Control," on the opposing side. The review mentions that Mr. Hoover is cited by Greenwood as the highest authority in opposition to public ownership, and Smith is quoted by Raushenbush and Laidler as pointing out the superior advantages of public ownership in Ontario. That the temper of the reviewer is not hostile to Smith in this connection is evident from his expressed hope, not only that the two books be read together, but that "a million copies of 'Power Control' could be read by intelligent Americans before they forget the revelations the Federal Trade Commission is now making."

THE Federal Trade Commission has resumed its inquiry into propaganda methods of the public utility organizations, which has already been of such value; and it is revealing new facts of the same character as those previously made public. It finds, for example, that Mr. M. B. Darnall, editor of the Florence, Ala., Herald, has been issuing a news service which he has sent free of charge to a large list of other newspaper editors throughout the country. Oddly enough, this service has consisted exclusively of attacks on government ownership of public utilities; and still more oddly, the power trust liked Mr. Darnall's activities so well that they paid him handsomely every week for his time and trouble. Did the news service indicate this fairly important fact that it was all paid propaganda? It did not.

THE public utility propaganda has been so bad, and has smeared so many men of heretofore unblemished reputation, that it is important not to make it seem worse than it is. For that reason we are glad to point out that the cases of William Allen White and Bruce Barton, which got into the headlines through the Federal Trade Commission investigation last week, are far from being on all fours with those of the bribed college professors and editors. White received $500 for making a speech before a convention of public utility men, not an unreasonable fee for an address by a man of his reputation. The views he expressed were his own, often previously uttered, and of no special value in the anti-public-ownership campaign. Mr. Barton's fee of $5,000 was not for speeches or articles written by him, but for "envelope stuffers," produced by the advertising agency of which he is one of the owners, and distributed openly by the public utility companies. We think our readers will agree that there is a world of difference between the work of White and Barton and such activities as those which appear to have been followed by Mrs. John D. Sherman, former President of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, who was on the utilities' pay-roll for $600 a month for a year while the Federation was making a supposedly impartial survey of the use of modern labor-saving electrical and other equipment in the home. We wait with interest for Mrs. Sherman to explain the services for which this remuneration was paid.

MANY persons are aware that there has long been a group in the United Mine Workers of America which is dissatisfied with the present leadership of

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that union. This group includes some radicals, but even though it may be dominated by them, the plight in which the miners have found themselves in recent years has suggested to many disinterested persons the desirability of a change of policy. A short time ago, a meeting was held in Pittsburgh for the purpose of organizing a new union, and what happened then and afterward clearly points to collusion between the United Mine Workers and the Pittsburgh police authorities to destroy the enterprise at its beginning. When the delegates assembled on September 9, in the Labor Lyceum on Miller Street, a group of U. M. W. A. pickets assembled, and a free fight ensued, in which numbers of men were badly beaten, one so seriously that his life was in danger. The police arrived on the scene tardily, suggesting that they were intentionally waiting until the U. M. W. A. men had done what damage they could, and proceeded to arrest all the leaders of the movement for a new union, of whom they had an accurate and complete list. The rest of the delegates returned to the several hotels where they had already registered, and there in the course of the next day they were visited in their rooms by gangs of U. M. W. A. men and by the police. The former beat up everyone they could find, and the latter continued to hunt down and arrest those whom they were able to identify as leaders. All told, more than 120 of the latter were arrested. About twenty men were fined, and these and some eighty others were released, twenty-seven being held for further legal action.

SHORTLY thereafter, the office of the Miners' Relief Committee, an organization believed to be sympathetic to the movement for a new union, was raided by postal authorities, who seized all correspondence files, books and other documents of every kind. They did so by virtue of a subpœna issued by a federal judge, on information supplied by officers of the U. M. W. A., who charged that misappropriation of funds had taken place. Prompt action by attorneys for the Relief Committee resulted in voiding the order, and most of the seized material was returned, though some documents are still missing. Two more attempts have been made to have subpœnas issued, but neither of these has been successful as we go to press. We are glad to report that the American Civil Liberties Union is interesting itself in the whole affair, and proposes to institute whatever court proceedings may be necessary to protect the rights of those miners who disagree with the present policies of the U. M. W. A. Persecution by union officials in coöperation with the police is quite as obnoxious as the more familiar variety in which mine owners and guardians of the law work hand in hand. The New Republic agrees with John Brophy that those who oppose the present union administration had better stay within it. But this belief does not negate the necessity of protecting the rights of those who disagree.

Smith as Political Expert

GOVERNOR SMITH'S two speeches on farm relief and water power will probably prove, in several respects, the most important of his campaign. They both concern burning economic issues, one of which has already been marked by much distress, another of which is bound to be of deep meaning for the future welfare of the people. They are addressed to the most dissentient elements of the Republican ranks—the midwest farmers and the progressives—whose votes would be essential to a Democratic victory. And they are the first campaign speeches by the candidate on questions of national policy, which reveal how he understands such questions, and how he proceeds in the handling of them.

Candid critics must admit that, if they were to be judged as economic essays with pretensions to complete treatment of the general subjects with which they deal, they would leave something to be desired. The agricultural speech outlines no rounded and permanent policy of dealing with the basic problems of farm marketing. It does not answer or even raise the question, how, if prices for farm products are to be increased, overproduction is to be avoided which may eventually undermine the remedy set forth. The water-power speech does not outline any curb for the utilities except in connection with those hydro-electric properties now owned by states and nation; it does not touch upon public ownership or regulation in general. The most that can be said with regard to these omissions is that neither speech closes the door to further and more basic considerations of this sort.

But the speeches are not calm economic essays, nor is it pertinent to expect of them complete and final discussion of their respective subjects. They are, in the first place, fighting speeches of a candidate seeking election, and they are, in the second place, the efforts of a politician of the first order, which illustrate what he conceives the function of politics to be; how he makes political processes real to himself and to those who listen to him. As such, they are admirable and useful in the highest degree. They breathe into the political atmosphere a vigor which has so long been lacking in American public life, and give evidence of a quality which is capable of making our political institutions move rather than stagnate.

The Omaha speech, in part, legitimately emphasizes the dereliction of the Republicans, with the advice and encouragement of their presidential candidate, in regard to the ills of the farmers. The farmers were in distress in 1924, and were admitted to be so in the Republican platform, which promised remedy and relief. The farmers are today still in the same kind of distress, and the same vague promises are made in the new Republican

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platform. During the intervening period, farm representatives hammered out and passed through Congress the measure of relief they desired, only to be contemptuously thwarted by the Republican President, with the aid of Mr. Hoover. Condemnations of this negation, and of Mr. Hoover in this connection, by eminent Republicans who have the confidence of the farmers, are quoted. Can the farmers trust the Republicans again? Such an attack is not mere political claptrap. It raises, in relation to a specific important issue, the question of party responsibility and sincerity. If farmers who want relief and do not get it vote for the same party which has turned them away, if persons who have devised and supported a specific measure vote for candidates who have killed this measure, there is no reality in representative political institutions. The value of this sort of campaigning is equally high, whether the specific measure the farmers wanted is sound or not. It tends to prevent the political decisions of the electorate from being ruled by meaningless generalities. In so far as it is effective, it forces Mr. Hoover and the Republicans to convert the farmers from support of the McNary-Haugen type of measure in order to win their votes. It appeals to the interest of the electorate, and calls for arguments applied to specific questions of legislation.

Nor does Mr. Smith himself dodge the issue he raises. He gives perhaps the most accurate and the simplest popular explanation of the aims and methods of the McNary-Haugen type of legislation which has ever come before the public. He pledges himself in its favor. He makes it clear that, in a nation where industrial products receive the benefit of tariff protection, the farmer can receive equal benefit only if the exportable surplus is lifted off the domestic market. He frankly states that he does not know how best to solve the problem of distributing the cost of doing so over the crops benefiting—this problem, originally met by the famous "equalization fee," he will leave to experts. It is plain that his objection to the equalization fee does not apply to its aims, but to its details. After this, no farmer who believes in the McNary-Haugen remedy has the slightest excuse for not preferring Smith to Hoover.

And Mr. Smith is not content to leave the matter here. What, as alternatives, does Mr. Hoover propose? More tariff. But that is absurd, because the tariff we have already is ineffective in protecting crops which have an important sale abroad. Coöperative marketing associations. But Mr. Smith also favors them. The St. Lawrence waterway. But this will take so long to build that it will not help as an emergency measure. There is no flaw in Smith's logic, in his explicitness, in his frankness. He simplifies and defines the issue. He demands an intelligent choice. In spite of any misgivings as to the ultimate adequacy of the McNary-Haugen measure, one is confident that, with this emergency relief enacted, Smith would turn his attention with equal aptitude and directness upon the next difficulty. He would shape the problem so that the people could recognize it and deal with it through political instruments. This is the quality of his lucid mind and his political expertness—a quality rare and precious in a democratic government.

Likewise, in the water-power speech, the Democratic candidate exhibits equal simplicity and concreteness in presenting to a large public the first essentials of the subject. He declares unequivocally for public ownership and control of water-power sites already in public hands, as well as of the generating plants to be built upon them, such as those proposed at Boulder Dam and Muscle Shoals. He wants also the public right to regulate by contract the distribution of the power and its price to the consumer. The New Republic has so long and so frequently advocated these measures, and has dwelt so much upon their importance, that it is needless to repeat the arguments here. The significant fact is, that for the first time in the history of this issue, a public man who could command a national audience has taken the pains to understand this subject and to explain it to the electorate. A candidate seeking an office of great power and influence has had the courage to deal with it in other than broad equivocations, to state what his concrete policy would be, and to ask the voters whether they favor it or not. And at the same time he has justly illuminated the vagueness of his opponent on the question, and has created for that opponent the moral necessity to define his position because of the connection which is shown between the power interests and the Republican party, especially in the indefensible appointment of Roy O. West as Secretary of the Interior.

Mr. Smith's attack on the propaganda methods of the power lobby is unflinching: while the standards of our public life ought to be high enough so that every candidate would without question join him in that attack, as a matter of fact our politicians have for the most part shrunk from saying anything which might offend influential groups of industrialists and their retainers. If progressive voters do not appreciate the immense superiority of Smith to Hoover on hydro-electric power, there is little hope for progressivism in the United States. Senator Norris himself could not have done better. The issue is joined; the voters have an opportunity to exert their power in favor of a specific course on a matter of supreme importance.

The difference in political meaning between Hoover and Smith thus becomes more sharp with every day of the campaign. Hoover is silent about many important issues; when he does mention them, he fumbles and takes as few risks as possible;

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he says that problems are complex and will be solved by the majestic expertness of the Republicans. He is driven reluctantly to speak at all; at present only two or three more speeches are planned for him; he allows his lieutenants to answer any challenges which are answered. Even if Hoover had the supreme competence to deal with all problems which his friends attribute to him, his campaign still would be summed up in an appeal to hire a competent expert, to elect a benevolent dictator, to let someone else do our job for us. Smith, on the other hand, realizes that it is the function of a political executive to arouse the popular support which will enable him to proceed effectively with the tasks entrusted to him. He sees that there are sharp differences of interest in the community, and that technical competence is of little use unless it is engaged in behalf of sound specific policies which are of benefit to the wider interest. Moreover, he realizes that technical competence itself, in political administration, needs the coöperation of the public, that democracy fails unless voters can be brought to participate, to the extent of their ability, in the job to be done. Smith can engage as good engineers as Hoover. The important question is, how their efforts are to be directed and how they are to be supported.

Mr. Smith's handicap is that it takes time to explain new issues to the public as he explains them, that it takes repeated emphasis to arouse active popular support out of the lethargy in which the blind trust in our supposedly superior ruling interests has left the American people. We fear that he has begun too late. But, whether he succeeds or not, the kind of campaign he is making will be a priceless contribution to the life of our institutions. It renews a hope that politics may be used as an instrument of social action rather than as a means of private gain and a sedative for a languid public.

The Progressive Attitude towards Prohibition?

ELSEWHERE in this issue of the New Republic a subscriber, Mr. Carlyle C. Ring, asks certain fair and important questions about our attitude toward prohibition, which we shall try to the best of our ability to answer candidly. The problem of what is to be done about prohibition is so complicated and vexatious that not unnaturally it provokes sharp differences of opinion among voters who in other respects may agree. Mr. Ring begins by asking whether the New Republic believes prohibition to be unprogressive. Considering its past and present effects on the political and social life of the American people, we must emphatically answer in the affirmative. In fact, we doubt whether, as long as the Volstead Act remains the law of the land, anything like a wholesome relation can subsist between American organs of government (both state and federal) and a progressive social and economic program. Such a program is not, of course, wholly dependent for its realization upon a sympathetic popular response to social legislation. Progressives have in the past over-emphasized the importance of government as the instrument of human amelioration. Nevertheless, progressivism remains in certain essential respects an expression of the collective conscience of the community in its effort to make for more and better human life, and there are occasions when this sense of collective responsibility can assert itself most effectively through legislation and public administration. The Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act have between them brought confusion and contempt upon the American government both in its state and in its federal expressions. It has undermined their authority as possible instruments of social policy.

It has wrought harm to the prestige of the states by authorizing the national government to issue a dubious command concerning social behavior which, in any well balanced federal system, should be treated at least partly as a matter of local rather than of national responsibility. A law which forbids all citizens to perform certain common and customary acts of private conduct depends for its successful enforcement upon the support of local opinion. If it fails to obtain such support, the central government which issues the order is obliged perforce to adopt exceptional measures to insure obedience. In the case of the Eighteenth Amendment, for instance, Congress should, as soon as it became clear that its authority was being generally and systematically challenged, have set up a federal police and police courts in the worst centers of disobedience, and forced the local communities to obey the obnoxious law. Its failure to push its interference to this extreme has, of course, limited the damage which the national government has done to the authority of the states, but the community as a moral body is paying a heavy price for this illegal vindication of what so many of its members took to be their individual and local rights. States like New York and Maryland, which have refused to adopt enforcement acts, are practically nullifying a provision of the federal Constitution, or are conniving at its nullification by their citizens. The people of a state like Pennsylvania, which has passed a severe Volstead Act of its own, are expressing by the notorious popular violation of the law contempt for both federal and state authority. Throughout the union the mischievous theory of an essential antagonism between state and federal action is being revived.

On the whole, however, in spite of the invasions of former state jurisdiction which the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act authorized, it is

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federal rather than state authority which the nationalizing of prohibition has brought into suspicion, disrepute and even contempt. Millions of American citizens are persistently and intentionally flouting the federal government for reasons which they can justify to their own consciences. They carry on their disobedience with the bribed connivance not only of state but of federal officers. Most of these criminals are in other respects law-abiding citizens. Their law-breaking society includes with but few exceptions all the business, artistic, professional, labor and political leaders of the larger cities. Their behavior constitutes, so far as we know, the most flagrant conspiracy against the authority of the law which good citizens in a civilized community have ever perpetrated. It depends for its success on coöperation between respectable society and the organized underworld, which enables the latter to increase steadily in the resources at its command and in the effrontery of its crimes of violence. During its continuance the American body politic will suffer from a kind of cretinism which will retard in every respect its growth as a moral community. The longer it endures, the more injurious and the less remediable its effect will be. American public opinion finds it difficult, if not impossible, to concentrate attention on any other public question until it can ease its bad conscience about prohibition.

It is futile to talk, as the churchmen still do, about educating these lawbreakers to obey the law. The attempt to deal with the evils of intemperance by education ceased as soon as the Eighteenth Amendment was adopted. National prohibition exacerbated the psychological opposition of the liquor-drinkers to reform by consent. Instead of increasing their sense of responsibility for the injurious social effects of intemperance, prohibition almost annihilated it. Inasmuch as the government had scorned the distinction between temperance and intemperance and had placed both under a common ban, why, they argued, should the people who only wish to drink temperately assume any responsibility for the evils of intemperance? The State, by classifying them legally with drunkards, has taken the matter out of their hands. Until 1918 they might conceivably have been persuaded to yield to educational efforts. Before the War, intemperance was little by little becoming socially disreputable. Now temperance is equally disreputable. It is only logical for them to answer an indiscriminate and imperious order with defiance. The moral authority of the government does not rest on its legal right to issue commands. When it forbids its citizens to perform innocent and inoffensive acts of private conduct, it must expect to have its authority flouted. If it wishes to have its authority respected, it should either make sure it is right or prepare sufficiently to force obedience on dissenters. The law-breakers are no doubt in need of education, but they need less than the makers of prohibition laws.

As long as the federal government is committed to a violation of the justifiable autonomy of individuals and states, the good which progressives can possibly accomplish in the United States by political means will suffer from fatal limitations. The first condition of a progressive revival is the restoration of the federal government in the esteem, the loyalty and the obedience of the American people, and how this can be done, save by a gradual withdrawal from its present vulnerable policy with respect to prohibition, we cannot imagine. The only other way out is by an honest and thoroughgoing effort to enforce the law: the earnest of such an effort being the establishment of federal police courts in all the large cities of the country. If Herbert Hoover were to advocate additional legislation of this kind, he would occupy with respect to prohibition an intelligible and defensible position. He could then with propriety call the Eighteenth Amendment an experiment of supreme importance in social reform. Unfortunately, however, from his point of view it would also be an experiment in something else which is less congenial to him. It would then become an experiment in federal centralization, which, if successful, would radically alter the customary and the appropriate distribution of responsibility for social welfare between Washington and the state capitals. As long as the national government asserts but does not insist upon its authority in this matter, the Volstead Act remains, no doubt, an experiment, but not in social welfare. The American people are inquiring by their present behavior how far they can go in flouting their own government without bringing about actual social dissolution. This in sober truth is the experiment which is endorsed by Mr. Hoover and by most of his socially prominent supporters.

We respect people who believe in the prohibition law and obey its commands and who vote for Hoover because they wish to see this law perpetuated. If they are mistaken, as we think, they err in good faith. But among the Hoover supporters probably a minority answer to this description. The majority of them, including most of the leaders, disobey the law, but at the same time vote to perpetuate it. They wish to have it perpetuated but not enforced on them, and this attitude on their part is worthy, not of respect, but something like contempt. It is they who are chiefly responsible for this ignoble experiment in trying to violate the law with impunity, combined in their case with a windy glorification of law and order. The curse of prohibition, both as a matter of state law and national law, has been from the start that the well-to-do members of the community preferred to have it enforced on others but not on themselves. A few of them are voting for Smith now, because he seeks to have the law repealed, but the great majority of them are voting for Hoover, because the policy which he announces leaves both the law and its lack of enforcement intact. They would vote against

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Hoover for proposing the necessary drastic measures of enforcement in larger numbers than they are now voting in his favor for his proposal to perpetuate it unenforced.

Mr. Ring asks the New Republic what we would suggest as the best method of dealing with the maleficent social effects of intemperance. In weighing the answer to this question, it must be remembered that prohibition which fails to prohibit does not do away with the evils of intemperance. Whatever legal remedy is proposed, it must above all be a remedy which can be honestly tried out; and the only way to make a start is to get rid of the remedy which is not being honestly tried out. The first step, consequently, is to restore to the states as corporate bodies some discretion as to the kind of law they are willing to enforce within their own jurisdictions. As long as the Eighteenth Amendment remains the law, the federal government must seek to prevent alcoholic beverages from being imported into the country or from moving in interstate commerce, but its interference with the liquor traffic, as President Wilson declared in 1924, should not and need not exceed these limits. By a revision of the Volstead Act, Congress could appropriate money for enforcement to this extent but no further. Inside of state lines, the state governments are entitled and should be allowed to do as they please, the Eighteenth Amendment notwithstanding. If local public opinion favored prohibition, they could prohibit. If not, they could try some kind of regulation. Probably certain of them would set up state dispensaries. The success of the dispensary plan in mitigating the evils of intemperance seems to be largely a matter of honest and intelligent administration. According to trustworthy accounts, dispensaries are operating satisfactorily in the Canadian provinces and in Scandinavian countries. But states which proved incapable of honestly administering agencies of state distribution could always revert to prohibition, in which event they would be no worse off than they are now. No doubt it would be difficult to prevent trade in liquor from moving between states which prohibited its sale and adjoined states which only regulated it, but the strict enforcement of any system of prohibition, state or national, implies an administrative competence which American politics has not as yet attained. The United States, being a huge and highly diversified country, cannot combine all the advantages of an efficient centralized government with all the advantages of the localized political and social responsibilities of a federal system.

Mr. Ring also asks the New Republic whether in its opinion Governor Smith would, if elected President, keep his promise to enforce the law. We do not believe that he would. Neither do we believe that Mr. Ring would, if he were elected President and had uttered the same promise. They not only wouldn't but they couldn't. Their problem with respect to prohibition enforcement would be analogous to that of a governor who called out the militia in order to suppress a popular riot and who could not keep his oath of office because the members of the militia fraternized with the rioters. In the case of the state and federal officials who fraternize with the breakers of the prohibition law, their connivance is partly prompted by the opportunity personally to profit therefrom, but their betrayal of their trust is also partly prompted by worthier motives. Such officials are the more willing to profit by the law-breaking of others because they disobey the law themselves and sympathize with its violation. The effective popular moral judgment of the community does not reprobate their conduct. A governor or President who is charged with the enforcement of the law can overcome such insubordination on the part of his subordinates only with the support of public opinion or by giving most of his time to the job. He would have to recruit a specially selected and trained force of prohibition agents from members of the Anti-Saloon League, and he would have to pay them generous salaries. He would lack the time and the money to make the effort. The enforcement of the prohibition law depends far more on Congress than it does on the President, and year after year Congress refuses to act. But while Governor Smith, who, so we are informed, disobeys the law himself, will not improve on his predecessors in enforcing its rigors, he will, there is sufficient reason to anticipate, enforce it as successfully as Mr. Coolidge has done, or as Mr. Hoover will do. Al Smith's prohibition policy is, as we recently pointed out, open to criticism, but it is sincere and realistic. Inasmuch as he is laboring to secure a modification of the law partly on the ground that an executive either cannot enforce it or can enforce it only at an excessive price, his position is more honest and progressive than that of a candidate who, although he does not propose adequate measures of enforcement, still calls it a noble experiment and still solicits the votes of sincere prohibitionists. They will have to vote for him, but he will betray them just as President Coolidge has betrayed them.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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The New Democracy in Mexico

IN 1920, after the flight and death of President Venustiano Carranza, Alvaro Obregon marched into Mexico City at the head of forty thousand troops—his second triumphal entry. The first had occurred six years earlier after the flight of Victoriano Huerta. Among his forces on both occasions were thousands of raw recruited Yaquis from the state of Sonora. They marched down the capital's aristocratic Paseo, dressed in white cotton "pyjamas," gray *sarapes,* queer straw hats with red ribbons; on their feet were single-thong *guaraches.* They came beating raw-hide drums with a primitive rhythm which imparted a jerky shuffling to their step. At the recent opening of Congress, these same tall, stern Yaquis stood guard, lined up for miles along the route taken by President Plutarco Elias Calles. Now they are clad in smart gray and black uniforms, disciplined according to the German manual—and, with their fierce, dark, unsmiling faces, they are the most striking, best-drilled corps of soldiers I recall having seen anywhere in the world.

On this occasion Calles proceeded through silent streets. Every proprietor of a building along the line of march was made personally responsible for any and everyone inside. Not a soul was allowed at the windows or on the balconies unless accompanied by police or soldiers. The approach to the Chamber of Deputies, for blocks around, was guarded by Cadet cavalry in black and red uniforms, seated on magnificent black horses. The Chamber itself was mounted with machine guns, and report has it that hidden machine guns were even trained on the Congressmen—there in that white interior, embossed in gold letters with the names of the heroes of Mexican history.

On this momentous occasion, when the assassination of Obregon had changed the current of national affairs, Calles entered the Chamber with his entire cabinet and his personal staff. No sooner had he mounted the high dais than the staff officers, in full dress uniform—black overlaid with gold—massed themselves on the two flights of stairs leading up from the floor to where he was seated. No deputy could get near him. Behind him were the twenty-odd Chiefs of Division, flaunting still more ornate uniforms, and in the right-hand upstairs boxes sat the generals of brigade and their staffs. And so, with the greatest military flourish and pomp I have yet witnessed in Mexico, Calles proceeded to usher in democracy to the troubled republic.

The President was using a two-edged weapon. He was intimidating the deputies, and he was intimidating the army. It was a perfectly staged bit of dramatics, admirably planned, perhaps by Calles himself, during the two weeks following the assassination of Obregon, when he moved out of Chapultepec Castle, the Mexican White House, and took up his residence in a completely inaccessible private dwelling, surrounded by soldiers. There he gave out reports that illness prevented him from attending to the affairs of the state. The military display at the opening of Congress was probably a necessary procedure—even including the machine guns. On the floor of the Chamber were deputies bitterly hostile to Calles, some of whom had set in motion dark, unfounded rumors as to his complicity in the killing of Obregon. Beneath him were hungry wolves of the Mexican bureaucracy who had been cheated out of their spoils by the passing of the President-elect. And so, with the heads of the army behind him, he announced to the Chamber that he was guarantor for the good conduct of the army; that though he was propounding a conciliatory policy, he "would never cease to fight for the revolution." If he were guarantor for the army, if, at his command, all its chiefs had come to Mexico City—something which even the great Diaz had never achieved—and if they were standing at his back, it was reasonable for the deputies to suppose that he could also use this army to enforce his will. At the same time he drove home to the soldiers the significance of this parliamentary scene. Though the army chief is supreme in his own bailiwick, he stands in awe of public opinion. He has a lurking inferiority complex regarding things legislative and civilian, which unfortunately often manifests itself in wanton abuse of personal power. This is peculiarly true in Mexico. One army chief was present who, fifteen years ago, wore gold earrings and sandals. Another, not so many years ago, could scarcely sign his name. Probably the majority of them have had at most two or three years of schooling. This unruly body is at present loyal to Calles, but its loyalty would not endure any sudden shift of circumstances.

When he turned to the army heads, therefore, it was with the Chamber at his back. Shaking his finger at these innocents of many battles, much as he may have done to his school children eighteen years ago, he denounced *caudillaje,* the vicious system of rule by military heroes, which, for more than a century, has made Mexico the prey of unprincipled militarists. And as he spoke, the army heads, in rather schoolboy fashion, rose to their feet and stood at attention, though more than one must have felt himself a true *caudillo,* capable of ruling the land. The exhortation was a not-too-

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veiled criticism of the latter-day ambitions of Obregon himself; and in the Chamber were men who, a few months before, would have laid down their lives for Obregon. And so, Calles, between enemies, played civilian against militarist and *vice versa*, and the result was a moral victory. The house rose to its feet like a surge of the sea. In the emotional stress, Ambassador Morrow, in the diplomatic box, committed the happy *faux pas* of also rising to his feet. Only black-bearded Aurelio Manrique, agrarian deputy, remained sullenly seated, hissing out a virulent and sinister *"farsante."*

The significance of Calles' speech resides in the fact that the civic and military forces have reached a moment of balance. No military group can ignore the civic agencies of self-government which have expanded during the past eighteen years, and no civilian faction can forget the factor of the army in realizing its aims. The President not only played the army off against the forces making for an era "of institutions and law," but kept the Catholics and reactionaries quiet by an offer—whether made in good faith remains to be seen—for proper minority representation in the Chamber through just elections. His speech, with its orientation toward Wilsonian democracy, must be regarded, not as a piece of utopian idealism, or even as a program of action —for the instrumentalities for what he proposes are utterly lacking—but as a masterpiece of political expediency. Ideologically, it is a sad retrogression. It turns its back upon Obregon, and is a slap at Calles' own record. It ignores the whole trend of the so-called Revindicating Revolution which came into power with the passing of Carranza. In short, it goes back to the wishy-washy political credo of Francisco Madero. It attempts to make of the Mexican revolution a political reform rather than a social movement. It ignores the agrarian problem; and it stresses political changes entirely impracticable at the present moment.

On the other hand, in the light of the delicate balance at present between the military and the more orderly instrumentalities of social control, the speech of Calles may prove a turning point, the approach toward a decisive moment in Mexican history when the relative strength of these two forces will be definitely tested. It probably marks the waning of the army as a medium of social control. A new type of social control may possibly be emerging in Mexico.

The practical effects of the Calles speech were immediately visible. Obregon sentiment was snowed under. He swept Congress in his wake. The shouts of Agrarian Deputy Manrique, *"Vive Obregon!"* fell upon leaden silence. The attempt of the Obregonist President of the Chamber, Ricardo Topete, in his reply to Calles, to create a counter-current in favor of the Obregon cause, died away with a few meager hand-claps. Followed then a secret banquet attended by Calles and the generals, in which it is generally believed the presidential successor was named. In two days the Obregon bloc had gone to smash; Topete was ousted and bought his ticket for Sonora; Manrique is in danger of being impeached; General Perez Trevino, the Obregon candidate *par excellence*, has faded from the scene; and Portes Gil, whom Calles chose to head his cabinet after Obregon's assassination, an out-and-out civilian, now looms in the offing as a probable choice. In two days Obregonism had died in Parliament; the Calles bloc was created, not merely by the moral pressure of the presidential message, but by other ways customary and devious, which are known, but not discussed.

Let us look at the political and social map a little more closely. If Calles has definitely disciplined the army, the popular agencies of political control are in a more deplorable state than before. In addition to making the army a nationalist instrument, Calles established the custom, carried out everywhere except where Obregon, for personal reasons, opposed it, of shifting the army chiefs to a new locality every six months. This prevented their gaining the strong regional and political control hitherto habitual. It limited the graft resulting from alliances with local politicians, agrarians, landed proprietors, industrials. But on the other hand, the Calles doctrine of One Church, One Law, One State has weakened all but the official political and social instrumentalities, and has prevented the free organized expression of popular opinion which is the basis of democracy. The Obregon leadership during the past two years brought about lamentable disintegration of the political forces. The various popular groupings are still present and still have a measure of vigor, but some new alignment must arise promptly if a government of institutions and laws is to be achieved as a substitute for personal rule.

What are the possibilities, if not for democratic rule, *à la* the United States, for some form of orderly and organized control by the outstanding popular organizations and groupings of the country? Calles bitterly attacked *caudillaje*, but *caudillaje* has been a symptom, not a cause, of disease in the social body. What instrumentalities are to replace this state of affairs? Calles declares that democratic elections are to be staged. How? As Don Manuel has suggested, "miracles are not neatly caged in words." Calles demands that the army recognize the successor chosen by Congress, but Congress itself is certainly not a democratic institution. It was chosen in the heat of campaign and made up of followers of Obregon. Every deputy, before having his credentials recognized, was obliged to sign a pledge of fealty to the Obregon cause. There are no Catholic deputies, though certainly some would have been elected in certain localities, had democratic elections occurred. Merely because Obregon had a personal feud with the Labor party, there are as yet no Labor party delegates, though the new Calles majority bloc may

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seat some. Obregon claimed in his election, which was utterly uncontested, nearly two million votes—an absurd exaggeration. Excluding stuffed ballots, probably not 10 percent of this number were cast, for the simple reason that the casting of a vote in Mexico has never had any significance; militarism has ruled.

How is an overnight change to be effected? President Calles declares that henceforth politics shall operate through *bona fide* national parties. But why have these parties not existed in the past, and how are they to be created? The only one which is at all national has been the Labor party. Undoubtedly a Clerical party, even of the radical character of the *Partito Popolare* of Italy, prior to the rise of Mussolini, would not be tolerated. There is a sentiment for the formation of a nation-wide agrarian party, yet no effective organization has been effected and the existing National Agrarian party has fallen into the hands of urbanized demagogues. The obvious reason is that the peasants are still so poverty-stricken that they lack the material means to sustain a proper organization, even if they had the necessary preliminary experience in political activity, and were not divided into regional clans. Their only recourse heretofore has been the reliable rifle, hidden in the palm thatch of the *ramada*. With the rifle they have dealt vengeance to officials who neglected to respect their rights, or have seized lands which no legal recourse would have obtained.

Undoubtedly the bases of orderly popular control have been more widened under Obregon and Calles than ever before in Mexican history. Under Obregon's 1920-1924 regime, also, the budget for education reached its greatest amount; since the stressing of popular education under Jose Vasconcelos, this phase of Mexico's progress will never be permitted to go neglected. Under Calles previous gains were consolidated and enormous strides achieved in rural education. Even so, illiteracy is still great, racial barriers are still high, and only a small minority of the country is fit to participate in direct political control.

One of the grave problems of Mexico is regionalism and local separatism. All the emphasis by Calles upon a nationalistic credo has neither wiped this out nor given it legitimate expression. On the contrary, in certain directions, it has increased. First of all, there is the present phenomenon, not of what we would call states' rights, but of state bossism, or *caciquismo,* as it is known in Mexico, a phenomenon also of the more stable period of the Diaz dictatorship. Instead of national personalities and movements, a vertical form of political control has prevented political unification. In each state the political *Jefe* has gathered all the threads of power into his own hands. Thus have emerged state organizations of workers and peasants, even state groups of literati to sing the glories of the local Cæsars. Each of these states has its own character, depending on whether the leader is conservative or revolutionary. There is an Indian regionalism, in many places semi-autonomous, and an economic one. What does the copper producer of Sonora have in common with the *henequén*-grower of Yucatan?

The possibility of immediate political reform, to my mind, does not lie in the direction of a national political democracy, but in the jockeying for control and influence among the various social and political groups, with an army sufficiently disciplined and wise enough to discern the true victors and peacefully to ratify the results of this civic interplay. Today Calles is the guarantor for such a result. But when he steps off the scene, will the army be content with this secondary role? The immediate hope for such a consummation is that, in spite of his utterances in favor of democracy, Calles will more or less name his successor and see the ship through the reefs just ahead. This course he seems to be pursuing.

A new alignment is coming. The disgruntled *Obregonistas,* the more unprincipled bureaucrats and part of the army will form one grouping, while the presidential successor of Calles, the labor organizations, and certain of the peasant elements will make up a second. This division may be slow in maturing, but seems definitely in the offing. The first-named grouping will center in the North, where the stronger military chiefs control all but the state of Tamaulipas. The second lies toward the South, and represents the more socially conscious elements. In recent years the North has won, largely because of its proximity to the United States and a ready source of arms. The South has held no political sway since Juarez and Diaz emerged from the state of Oaxaca, but it seems probable that the South ultimately must win, because it is more Mexican and because it represents the more basic social trends of the country.

CARLETON BEALS.

Mexico City.

Complaint of Time

Though we had given to love
All time gave to us,
Some pang would breed thereof
Still to undo us.

Time from whose gifts are drawn
Pains without measure,
May grant one day, to dawn
All for our pleasure.

But till that day receive
This fond profusion,
Leave us to sleep and leave
Time to confusion.

A. E. COPPARD.

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The Minds of Two Men

THEY are both good men, these two candidates for "the highest office in the gift of the American people." You and I would be rather lucky, as things go, to have our respective affairs, or even our collective affairs, entrusted to the hands of either. Yet they are different: so different that if you had sought the perfect antithesis for each you could hardly do better than go to the other. Let us look at these differences; and since we are all getting a little tired of hearing the names of the individuals, let us call them, for the moment, X and Y.

If you study the early lives of X and Y, you get a feeling that these differences between them have grown in recent years. They are on diverging paths; two decades hence they will be out of sight of one another, as they are out of hail already. It is impossible to say, with our limited knowledge of what it is that changes men, why this should be so; when you ponder them, it is as though some force unseen and inscrutable had moved them in accordance with unknown plans—or none.

Nothing is so characteristic of any man as his attitude toward combat, and the differences between these two are nowhere else more marked. Neither is a coward. X has proved this by romantic and dangerous adventures in every part of the world, Y by incessantly doing important and responsible things which transcend the courage of his advisers. There is this curious difference, however: that X, who has been under fire on four continents, is made miserable by opposition, and Y, who has never crossed salt water or heard the sound of an angry gunshot, rejoices when he finds himself confronted by a foe. Since so much of the life of each has been lived in close contact with great affairs, where the fighting is fiercest, the first has had much opportunity for unhappiness and (for this and other reasons) has on the whole been an unhappy person; while the second (also for this and other reasons) has on the whole been happy. This difference perhaps seems greater than it is, due to the fact that X has little humor, and that little of the shy and intimate variety which dies if more than two persons breathe the air of the same room with it; while Y has a robust and simple sense of comedy, barely halting this side of clownishness, which he can transmit to ten thousand people standing in the open air and in a moment rock them with deep merriment.

The difference between these two is to be marked, again, in their manner of doing their day's work. Both, as I have said, have wrestled with great problems, and X is famous for his ability to respond in an emergency of a sort which causes many persons to lose their heads. Yet X, who answers so magnificently in times of crisis, has his own peculiar methods of work, and cannot modify them—or has never tried to. He is most useful when he is put in complete control and given wide and autocratic authority. Asked to become one of a group with equal powers, and to argue things out with them to a common decision, his wings are clipped. When he persuades, it is by stating the facts and letting them force their own conclusion. To bend himself to study the mind of his opponent seems to him a little ignoble. With Y, just the contrary is true. His interest in other men's souls is the lively curiosity of the scientist; he is willing to accept the defects of those about him, and accommodate himself to them, for the sake of the result he is seeking to achieve. With proper respect for his own abilities, he has even more for other men's knowledge. Y's characteristic procedure, with a knotty problem to be solved, is to call a council, and take expert opinion in adequate quantities. Then he makes up his own mind, perhaps agreeing with the experts, perhaps throwing their advice out of the window, since, after all, it is he who must bear the responsibility if things go wrong.

Both these men are supposed to be realists, and, in a sense, both are. They deal with facts and make an appeal to the cold, rational judgment of persons who respect facts. Yet, curiously enough, X, who is supposed to be skilled in handling information, more often gives you a sense of doing wishful thinking about it than does Y. X marshals his statistics always to prove something; Y deals with fewer tables of figures, but when he does, he seems to look at the facts primarily to see what they proved. Y accepts the world as it comes, and is candid and somewhat cynical about it; X gives you the feeling, so often found among the members of Fundamentalist groups, that he dislikes the world and proposes to remodel it, however much it may protest. Yet with this there goes, in X, a tenderness toward the victims of misfortune and injustice, provided only that he can see them, or can identify them with groups long familiar to him. He wishes the world well, within the limits imposed upon him by his temperament—and since this temperament also comprises great abilities of a certain type, few men who have ever lived have had so good a claim on the world's gratitude.

If we keep these things in mind, we shall not be surprised to see that X cannot bear ever to confess that he has been mistaken, while Y has no such feeling of the sacredness of his own past deeds. Y, to be sure, does not often make open confession of error, since infallibility is supposed to be a necessary garment of the public man; but privately he is ready, with a humorous twist of the head, to confess himself at fault. All of us in this world are egoists; the difference is only of degree. The modest man is one whose egoism is a little morbid, so that he must hide it from the light of the world. He belittles himself in advance in or-

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der that others shall refrain from applying the measuring-rod to his abilities and achievements, since he could not bear the result if it were less than triumphant. The only question about any man's self-esteem, therefore, is whether it is of a sort which hampers him. With Y it may be said that this is not true. There is a realism about his thinking, such as used to be described as French, and it carries with it an ability to take even personalities impersonally as a part of the game. Paradoxical as it may seem, this is why he is so quick to answer attacks, to debate and reply and refute. If he cared deeply, as deeply as does X in similar circumstances, he would take refuge, like X, in agonized silence.

Y is one of the supreme coöperators of his generation; X, one of the greatest dictators. The word "tyrant," you remember, at first meant an autocratic ruler who was not necessarily selfish or cruel, but did for the people those things he felt were best for them. In that sense, X is a magnificent tyrant. Whether you like X or Y will depend upon your choice as to the qualities which you think are most necessary and important in shaping the direction of American life in 1928. If I choose Y, it is not without recognizing the profound usefulness of such a temperament as X's, and wishing that some harness could be devised which could turn to full account the thrust of those mighty shoulders.

BRUCE BLIVEN.

The Ticket Agency

I'M LOOKING for some tickets," said fat and fifty to the desk in the agency.

"Lost or left?" said the clerk.

"Neither," said the customer.

"What show?" asked the clerk.

"I can't tell you," said the customer.

"Aw, come on," said the clerk.

"I don't know," said the customer.

"That's different," said the clerk. "No ideas, no tickets. We start from scratch."

"I'm taking my husband," said the customer.

"Dragging or leading?" asked the clerk.

"Dragging," said the customer.

"Something soporific?" suggested the clerk.

"No," said the woman. "Not that. He snores."

"Something light?"

"Something light," said the customer.

"Bevy of girls?" pursued the clerk.

"Not too bevy," said the customer.

"I've just the thing," said the clerk. "The Scandals of Desbrosses Street."

"Is it clean?" asked the customer.

"See your face in it," said the clerk.

"I don't want to," said the customer.

"I don't blame you," said the clerk.

"Perhaps something more . . . " suggested the customer.

"Most of them are more, with dots after it," said the clerk.

"I remember in Paris," began the customer, looking thinner and fortier.

"You are supposed to forget in Paris," said the clerk, reminding her.

"I was thinking of the Moulin Rouge," said the customer.

"Did you drag your husband to that?" asked the clerk.

"I followed him," said the customer, embarrassed.

"Then the following plays are what you want," said the clerk.

"But not too *you know,*" said the customer.

"I know," said the clerk. "I know a whole lot."

"That's more than my husband does," said the customer.

"How about 'The Syphon'?" suggested the clerk. "That's a nice soiled little play."

"That might do," said the customer. "Have you got two seats in front?"

"Center Q," said the clerk.

"That's not my idea of 'in front'," said the customer.

"It's in front of R," said the clerk.

"You must have something better," said the customer.

"I've got a quart of rye at home," said the clerk.

"What about B?" said the customer.

"Sold out," said the clerk.

"What about C?"

"Sold out."

"What about D? You must have something in D."

"Two seats center in D; but they're not adjoining. They're one seat apart."

"Who's in the middle seat?"

"I don't know, Madam. We don't photograph our customers."

"It's probably a man," said the woman.

"A handsome one," said the clerk.

"Don't you think he'd move over?"

"He might if you pinched him," said the clerk.

"Well, I don't know," said the woman. "What else could I do?"

"You could go to 'The Sparrow'," said the clerk.

"I hate sparrows," said the woman.

"Or there's 'The Bilious Eye'," said the clerk.

"Let me see the diagram," said the woman.

"Here you are," said the clerk, bringing out a map of the metropolitan subway system.

"I'd like to sit here," said the customer.

"The traffic officer wouldn't let you," said the clerk. "That's the middle of Forty-second Street."

"Are you trifling with me?" said the customer.

"It's the wrong map," said the clerk. "Here you are."

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"This will do," said the customer, pointing.

"That's an exit," said the clerk. "You want to be right down here."

"What row?" said the customer.

"M," said the clerk.

"M'm'm," said the woman, making a digital movement. "A-B-C-D—what number is it?"

"Thirteen," said the clerk.

"It won't do," said the customer. "Is that all you've got?"

"I've got a pain in the neck," said the clerk.

"I'm getting tired of serious plays," said the woman.

"It's been a long act," said the clerk. "Let's go out and smoke."

"I'm thinking of a revue," began the woman.

"How about 'Blue Daisies'? There's a good show. Nothing but stars. Best music in town. Two on the aisle."

"No," said the customer. "I guess I don't like revues."

"You have a marvelous distaste, Madam. You should be a critic."

"Where is Alan Bloom playing?" asked the woman.

"In the outfield, if you mean the ball player."

"I don't," said the customer.

"I never heard of him," said the clerk.

"Have you any suggestions?" said the woman.

"Just one," said the clerk.

"What?" said the customer.

"Make up your mind," said the clerk.

"All right. You say something and I'll do it."

"Go home," said the clerk.

"What night were those tickets for?" asked the woman.

"You don't mean all those tickets?" said the clerk.

"Yes," said the woman.

"Tonight," said the clerk.

"I wanted them for tomorrow night," said the woman.

"My God!" said the clerk. "We don't have to go over that again?"

"All over it," said the woman.

"Come in after lunch," said the clerk, "and we'll open up some new plays. I want this to be a success."

"You're sure you can fix me up?"

"Madam, I'll fix you up if I have to put you in the cast."

"I'll come back," said the woman.

"Come back early. You might have a question or two."

"All right," said the woman.

"Did you ever think of going to the movies?" asked the clerk.

"No," said the woman.

"Well, think about it," said the clerk.

"I shall," said the woman.

"Think about it hard," said the clerk, "and go."

DAVID MCCORD.

Washington Notes

AS THIS campaign advances toward its last month, it is beginning to be plain to those who look below the surface that the Democratic chances rest very largely upon the prospective support of two classes of voters which in the past have almost uniformly been Republican. One of these is the Negroes and the other the Germans. The first, of course, has always been a fundamental Republican asset. The second has been overwhelmingly Republican since the War. It is easy enough to talk about the swing of organized labor, of the dissatisfied farmer and of the progressives who followed La Follette, but the practical men in both parties know that it is not from any of these that danger threatens the Grand Old Party. The real uncertainty lies with the two other groups named, and in that fact lies one of the most extraordinary features of the whole fight. From these two sources, and these alone, is there any real hope of making up Smith's loss through the bigots in his own party, a loss which will be more or less serious in every state. There is no use blinking the fact that, were it not for the unprecedented prospects of Smith support from Negroes and Germans, his campaign would be without much more than the slenderest hope. Not to recognize this is not to face realities.

Neither the Democratic nor the Republican management is in a position to talk about this phase of the situation openly, but both are, none the less, concentrating on it as forcefully as they can. The reasons for the usual leanings of the Negro toward Smith are fairly easy to understand. For one thing, the Negro is wet; for another, he is anti-Klan; and for a third, he has no feeling of kinship for candidate Hoover such as he has for the ordinary Republican presidential candidate, seasoned and experienced in party politics. As to the Germans, in addition to their being wet, there is the fact that the persistent painting of Hoover as pro-British has had an effect. Among both these elements, the Raskob agents, well upholstered with cash, are active and numerous. The really capable men on the Republican side—a classification which, of course, eliminates Dr. Work and Director Allen—make no secret, in private conversation, of their concern.

Except for the occasional extreme wet of the du Pont type, the business and banking interests are behind the Republican ticket, as usual. Despite the strenuous efforts of the Raskob press bureau to make it appear that men of large affairs are flopping into the Democratic fold, there has been no shift of this nature. One of the Morgan partners, it is true, is off the reservation, but the firm, as a firm, is recognized as Republican. This was true last time despite the fact that one or two partners, merely as a matter of personal friendship, voted for the unfortunate John William Davis. The railroads and the public utility interests generally are for Hoover and against Smith, notwithstanding the Democratic declarations of the Swopes and Youngs and a few others. It is true that Mr. Hoover is personally unpopular with certain large figures of finance, and there was a general lack of enthusiasm about him on the part of certain New York campaign contributors whose views prior to the convention were represented in the anti-Hoover

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activities of that pathetic exponent of the good, the true and the beautiful in politics, Mr. C. Dewey Hilles. But the notion that, because of these things, Wall Street or the business interests, or whatever you choose to call the big financial and industrial line-up that put over Harding in 1920 and Coolidge in 1924, would change its politics and go Democratic is simply a delusion.

Nor is there any real Republican concern about the embattled farmer, despite the low price of wheat and potatoes. The Republicans have gone through this farm-revolt business many times. The farmer is always revolting, but he never makes good. Four years ago, he was flamingly for La Follette until about ten days before the election. Then he fell into line for the regular Republican ticket to which he is addicted, and from which, notwithstanding his rumblings, mumblings, groans and threats, he will not cut loose this time. At least, such is the conviction among the Republican leaders from the agricultural states who have been in Washington, and among the so-called Republican managers. I am told, however, that Chairman Raskob and Candidate Smith have fallen for the notion that the dry, Republican, Protestant farmer is so sore that he is "all set" to go Democratic this time and nothing can stop him. He may be sore, but it is hard to believe he is as sore as all that, and if I were Chairman Raskob I should not waste too much money and effort trying to find out.

The German and the Negro, as I say, are a much better bet, and as an illustration of what is going on underneath, I cite the perturbation of Republicans over Missouri. It is admitted that Missouri is a vital state to Smith—almost as vital as New York. It is hardly possible to figure out 266 electoral votes for him without the eighteen from Missouri. The concentration of money and effort by both sides there is already intense, and getting more so every day. The Germans and the Negroes constitute a large proportion of the vote, and the undoubted inroads being made among them by the Smith campaign are the basis for the present belief that the Democrats will carry the state. By means of blackboards and the voters' schools the Democrats are demonstrating to the Negroes and to the less alert of the Germans how easy it is to vote the whole Republican ticket—except the head. The same is to be done, I am told, in other states. There is, in fact, a well organized, highly financed, systematized and effective effort on the part of the Democrats to get the Negro to vote for Smith without having him feel that he has ceased to be a Republican. To a lesser extent, this is also being done with the Germans, and I am credibly informed that the results are furrowing the brow of no less a person than Handsome Herbert himself.

One part of the Republican effort to offset this Democratic drive is to utilize Senator Robinson, the Democratic vice-presidential candidate, as an antidote for Smith. The colored agents of the Grand Old Party are energetically pointing out that, while Governor Smith may be a wet and "agin" the Klan and a friend of the Negro in New York and all that, still, Presidents have a habit of dying, and if Al should be elected and die before his term was out, the man who would succeed him would be Joe Robinson from Arkansas, a very terrible fellow indeed from the colored viewpoint. Senator Robinson is much too far South to make an appeal to the Negro vote. The idea of a man from Arkansas in the White House does not sound at all good to the dissatisfied Negroes. All of this seems silly, and is. Nevertheless, it is important presidential politics—not, perhaps, presidential politics as it seems to the editorial writers of the New York Herald Tribune, or the stuffed-shirt statesmen of the Charles Evans Hughes type, or even the perfumed politicians like poor Mr. Hilles. But the real "practical guys," like Jim Watson, for example, understand its importance—you can be sure of that.

Speaking of Mr. Hilles, was there ever anything more typical than that unctuous comment of his when the announcement was made by New York State Chairman Machold that the rebellious Dr. Butler, calling at headquarters, had pledged himself to the support of the Hoover ticket? Said Mr. Hilles to the reporters, "That is fine—delightful, but I am not surprised. It was an inevitable intellectuality." Or was "intellectual inevitability" the phrase he used? It does not matter. One is just as good as the other. The only thought I had when I read it was, how mad it must have made the poor, pestered and perverse Professor. Anyhow it must be admitted that nobody but Dewey Hilles could have thought of it. No wonder all the lady committeewomen think him "just wonderful."

T. R. B.

Washington.

Encaustics

The Naughty Duchess

TO MY MIND this Scandinavian-American passage has been admirable, the food, the service, the friendly Danes who make up most of the passengers, and last, and happily, the absence of rowdy flirtations in the salons and on the decks. It is this last that Mr. B—— has seized upon for the bestowal of his praise. He grants you the rest—if you are not, that is, going on an English boat, the "Frederick VIII" is excellent—but it is the lack of impropriety on board that pleases him—immorality is his word for it.

Mr. B—— is a little Englishman from the Lake district. A small reddish man, his face cross-hatched with wrinkles, his eyes expostulant, irascible and full of hot vapidity, he smacks of chapels, reform and the grocer's trade in which he grew up. Going over, he says, on the way to America, his boat reeked with abominations. This sort of loose going on, so he hears, has gone over the world since the War, but the voyage across was his first contact with it on a large scale. He has been to America to see his daughter, whose husband has been so prosperous that they had presented him with the trip. Now he will give Denmark a brief examination, with an eye to some importing he thinks of doing, dairy products. On a large scale he had said; immorality in an individual instance, of course, he had seen, the case cried to heaven.

He begins to tell me of the Duchess who lives in his township. She is a woman of forty-five or more, tall, red-haired, very advanced in her views. You heard of her

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going to evening parties in Turkish trousers and sandals, sandals without stockings, bare legs and bare feet. And for those week-ends, with people up from London, and sometimes only men staying in the house—the Duke had lived abroad many years—the Duchess the only woman, the less said the better. He goes on about the Duchess and her class and their depravity; England needs to come down on them; his face is almost purple, the thin, dry body and high peevish voice are racked with his indignation. He must be right, I suppose, however futile; but his sour wrath is so unattractive that you understand how the martyrs were burned, not for their views, but out of irritation and boredom. I can see, as he talks, that Mr. B—— is overcome with the very idea of her ladyship, and I note that he has conveyed to me the two facts that she comes sometimes into his shop and that his wife knows her housekeeper.

I hear his talk vaguely as he goes on; I hear him, but I heed him not, my heart is far away. I am wishing we had duchesses like Mr. B——'s to spread about our towns at home, where the rule of the people flourishes and the aristocratic heritage of private opinion, distinction and disdain is toned down more and more to what the citizens would have, and mere negative prohibitions supplant the stiff problems of morality. Meanwhile, there is no one, no class, no standard, no authority the crowd recognizes, no voice it fears. What it decides is passed out as reason and thought. But Mr. B——, I can see, is intimidated by the Duchess. She represents something that puts him with all his little opinions in his place. The Duchess, I judge, is not all she should be; but for the good of the world, it is better that she should be naughty than that Mr. B—— should be certain of his opinions. He knows that she is wrong, but he is not so sure as he might be that he is right.

The Melting Pot

X—— is lean, fresh and much too glib. He begins most of his remarks with "Say," and ends the others with "I'll say it is," and always says "vurry" and "thoid"—this, he declares, is talking the New York language.

He has been in America seven years, and is a citizen of the U. S. A.—in fact, he left the university in the old country to come—and has a good business now in advertising, with an office on Park Avenue. When he first went into business for himself, after two years of newspaper work—where the money those guys don't pay, say!—he made a living with publicity for hotels. What you did was to telephone the hotel, find out who was there for lunch or something, telephone some of these people for permission to use their names—they always gave it—then when the notice appeared in the newspaper that Mrs. So and So was at the Hotel So and So for lunch yesterday, you cut the notice out and sent it to the hotel, which paid you twenty-five cents a line. If the notice appeared in five or six papers, you could see what it came to.

At the pier X——'s mother is waiting for him. You can see her waving her bouquet of flowers, a lovely, gentle Swedish lady, graceful too and elegant. It takes a long time for the boat to dock and X—— begins telling me again about his New York business. He buys space in newspapers and resells it to advertisers at double the rate. At the top of his space he runs an article by a professor, with pictures of this authority and his university degrees; this makes the public think everything advertised in the space has been tested and approved by an expert. It's a swell country, he'll say it is!

His bachelor uncle in New York owns two thousand acres of mahogany in Central America, bought it for an investment and hasn't touched it. He is his uncle's heir.

"Say, I hope he don't cut it. Trust me, say, I'll cut it."

Sucklings and Babes

"When I was in your delightful country two years ago," the Danish journalist says to me, "there was a vogue of books by very young persons. Young ladies of sixteen were writing passionate novels and confessions that appeared to be treasures of wisdom and natural, unpremeditated art; and children were writing books of great lyrical poetry."

"Yes," I reply, "you are quite right, sir."

"But this year it seemed different. It was now not very young people, but very old people who were creating great masterpieces. Old men of seventy-seven suddenly discovered to be geniuses, people of eighty writing their first books. And so many of them so widely acclaimed, pronounced so favorites, how do you say? Now why this change, why is it? Can you tell me?"

"Perhaps as time went on," I say, "we found the works of children too difficult, and want now the writings of those in their second childhood."

Stark Young.

Russia in Hollywood

THE Russian Revolution seems to have become a favorite subject of the American movies. The effect of this is rather unpleasant. When real Russian films of the revolution, "Potemkin" and "The Fall of St. Petersburg," are brought to America, they seem invariably to be regarded as dangerous, and the harsher and more inflammatory scenes are cut. But there is no harm in the Revolution, in Hollywood. The cruelty and oppression of the Tsar, the tragedy of social inequality, the uprising and triumph of the people, are all a set of theatrical formulas for arousing bogus emotions. Lenin and Trotsky usually figure, if they figure at all, as a team of German-Jewish low comedians, who are shown pushing the Tsar off the throne. We don't object when the French Revolution is made the background for this sort of picture: the French Revolution is almost as far away as the fall of Rome. But the Russian Revolution is yesterday: it is our own world. And when we are asked, in some American film, to be indignant over the spectacle of Cossacks riding down the people or of poor men refused justice by the representatives of a ruling caste, we wonder uneasily what would happen to a film which showed conditions in a Pennsylvania steel town, or the Sacco and Vanzetti case.

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This is especially true of "The Red Dance," which followed the Bernard Shaw Movietone. In spite of the beautiful Dolores del Rio (who has a much better chance in "Ramona"), I could not even sit through it. John Barrymore's picture, "The Tempest," is better. From an interview recently published in one of the movie magazines, it would appear that Barrymore himself is fairly well satisfied with this film. It is certainly better than "Don Juan," and, I suppose, less meretricious than "The Beloved Rogue," though less amusing. There are fewer bedroom scenes and less Douglas Fairbanks gymnastics than in the previous Barrymore picture; and there is on John Barrymore's part some attempt to play a character. The hero of "The Tempest" is a young peasant who succeeds in winning, in spite of the opposition of his superiors, an officer's commission. The General who has befriended him invites him to a ball at his house, where the young man, who has fallen in love with the General's beautiful daughter, gets drunk and disgraces himself. He is dishonorably discharged and stripped of his sword and insignia in front of the regiment. Then he is thrown into jail. War is declared, and all his comrades go off to the front, leaving him behind in his solitary cell. At the advent of the Bolsheviks (Kerensky never figures in these films), he is liberated. He appears in the black gown and astrakhan hat of a commissar (according to the movies, this is the ominous costume they wear), a sinister and embittered figure. He has at last been won over to the doctrines of the prophet of revolution who has been tempting him from the start and who now, a commissar himself, is invested with powers of life and death —an evil-looking fellow, with greasy hair, bad teeth and a satanic leer. When, however, he sees his old friend the General stood up against a wall and shot and when he finds his beloved, the General's beautiful daughter, in prison and in danger of being put to death, he runs to the diabolical commissar and announces his change of heart (in a caption) as follows: "You and I have been wrong —terribly wrong!" He kills the commissar and escapes with the beautiful aristocrat across the Austrian border.

John Barrymore has, as I say, attempted to make a part of this. He is quite good as the loutish young man, high-hatted by the guests at the party and finally getting drunk; and he manages to introduce into his later phase as the commissar a trace of Richard III. But his *pièce de résistance,* the long sequence of the imprisonment in the middle, doesn't quite come off. John Barrymore has evidently devoted considerable energy and attention to this, and he has had the integrity to go directly against the movie tradition, which insists upon heroes preserving their good looks through all kinds of fighting, ignominy and misfortune: he has made himself up to look as dirty, as sick and as feeble-minded as a man would be likely to look after several years of solitary confinement. But there is something false about the whole thing—perhaps, because the story is false from beginning to end.

Emil Jannings' "The Patriot" does not deal with the Russian Revolution, but with the conspiracy against the mad emperor Paul I, at the end of the eighteenth century. It is certainly one of the most interesting and best acted films ever made in this country. "The Patriot" has been adapted from a play by Alfred Neumann. And it differs from most moving-pictures in retaining in its screen version, and greatly benefiting by, some of the concentration and closely-knit quality of a good play. With very few characters, very little love interest and no variety of sets, Lubitsch has turned out a picture of rare dramatic honesty and surprising effectiveness. Jannings, as the half-witted Paul, gives what I suppose is his best performance since he came to America. It is astonishing that so gross a face as Jannings' can be made the instrument of such varied and subtle play—and in this part, he has made himself more gross and more hideous than ever before. Never has so much intelligence been brought to bear to produce an idiot! Never has an idiot been made to express so much of humanity! Jannings' Paul is like a fiendish and cowardly child, for whom we are finally made to feel sorry. Most extraordinary are the moments when he almost understands and sympathizes with the people about him. With what would appear a peculiarly thankless and barren role, Jannings has given a performance of unexpected crescendo force. When we should have thought that he had exhausted his resources, he surprises us in the final scenes.

Lewis Stone, as Pahlen, however, is nearly as good as Jannings. Distinguished and powerful statesmen are not usually among the types most successfully portrayed in the movies. But Stone convinces us, to a remarkable degree, of the strength of will, the stoic severity and the intelligence which, in Pahlen, contrast with the emperor's imbecility. The scenes between the two men—and these are the principal features of the film—are of a kind rarely seen in the movies. There are few captions, but we follow their conversations perfectly—even the crazy associations of ideas of the emperor's mind, even the mingled sincerities and ironies of Pahlen. Florence Vidor is also remarkably good, and very beautiful, in the role of Pahlen's mistress.

The sets and the photography of "The Patriot" are rather ugly, but the acting and the direction are wonderful, and seem to prove—what has sometimes been denied —that the movies are able to compete with the serious spoken drama in its own field.

E. W.

Drowned

You are a sea where music moves so deep,
Where wave and tide do so profoundly sing
That hearing them is the remembering
Of the dark drums and violins of sleep.
And I, a diver plunging down the steep
And perilous blue where your slow-wandering
And secret streams unfathomably swing
Am lost, and with their motion sway and sweep.

O dreaming sea, O white sea garlanded
In the swift serious petals of the foam,
I now beneath your music am come home,
Your lover, drowned. O what far-off, star-stranded
And lonely shore shall know me on that day
When, ocean-like, you cast your dead away?

HAROLD LEWIS COOK.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Progressives and Prohibition

SIR: As a reader and subscriber of the New Republic of several years' standing, and as one of your readers who has been stimulated, if not convinced, by your editorial policies, I am unable to understand fully the reasons which have brought the New Republic to the support of Al Smith so early in the campaign, after advising reserving opinion until the campaign was well under way. As a reader who considers himself open-minded and at least mildly liberal, I should like to know more of the reasons compelling the New Republic to a conclusion that seems illogical and which, I believe, many honest liberals will be unable to follow. Answers to the following questions, either in your columns or personally, may help to clear the field:

1. Why should a liberal oppose the prohibition amendment —or, for that matter, the Volstead Act? A liberal or progressive should be interested, it seems to me, in the uplift and improvement of the human race. He does not oppose federal control of the drug trade—or murder or theft. Why should he oppose prohibition as a method of control of the liquor traffic? Again, why should he oppose the amendment after a brief experiment of less than ten years, when the experiment in making Negroes voters is still in experimental form after sixty years? Why does the New Republic believe prohibition unprogressive?

2. Assuming that the New Republic, together with Al Smith and other modificationists and anti-prohibitionists, grants the desirability of temperance and the danger of a return to the saloon, what does the New Republic suggest as a real method of meeting the problem? Certainly not the dispensary plan advocated by Al Smith, which has been tried out in Southern states years ago and abandoned.

3. Why, even granting the need of change in the handling of the liquor situation, should a progressive temperance man vote for Al Smith? He says that when he takes the oath of office as President of the United States he will strictly enforce the law until it is changed. He took the same oath when he became Governor, but has he kept that oath? As Governor of New York State he took the oath to support the Constitution of the United States. Has he kept his oath in regard to the Eighteenth Amendment? Granted that most of Governor Smith's platform planks appeal to a progressive, outside of his prohibition stand, can a liberal forget that there is but one real issue in this campaign as conducted by Governor Smith—the wet and dry question? If prohibition is the leading issue, can a friend of temperance and moral advance vote for a man with Al Smith's record on moral issues? Certainly any liberal would be glad to find some way to punish the Republican party for its sins—but can we afford to place the modification of liquor control in the hands of an enemy of prohibition? Can a liberal, under these circumstances, do other than vote for Hoover—inasmuch as the Socialists have avoided the question?

Worcester, N. Y. CARLYLE C. RING.

SIR: Your editorial, "Prohibition in the Campaign," involves a fundamental assumption with which I find myself very much inclined to disagree, namely, that "the political weakness of prohibition consists in its real or alleged unenforcibility."

Of course, this is one of its weaknesses, but hardly the only one, nor perhaps even the most important. It seems to me perfectly obvious that a bad law, or a law that is disapproved by "a huge minority, if not a majority," of the people affected by it, will finally be modified or repealed—if it is not simply nullified—regardless of its enforcibility. In fact, the better it were enforced, the louder might be the demand for its repeal. Thus, with the Volstead Act, an attempt might be made to enforce it so strictly and literally that practically everyone would recognize it as a nuisance and revolt against it. Most people, not being interested in the underlying principle, tolerate the law merely because it is so easy to get the higher percentage drinks in spite of it; they are willing to do without mere wines and beer or try to make them for themselves, rather than take the trouble to make an effective protest. But once forcibly deprive them of that recourse—that is, if possible, interpret and enforce the Volstead Act strictly in the light of the Eighteenth Amendment, bearing in mind the purpose of its authors—and you will hear a fairly unanimous howl. So it appears to me that the modification or repeal of the law might be the result of either of *two* conditions: either its unenforcibility or what might be called its obnoxiousness.

For this reason I see no inconsistency in the position of Governor Smith, nor incongruity in the two opposing ranks of his supporters, supposing they are both equally sincere—the anti-prohibitionists in wishing to have the law repealed or amended, the prohibitionists in wishing to have it enforced as strictly as possible, regardless of the result to prohibition itself—and provided that the former are willing to endure a possibly much stricter enforcement of it for the time that may be necessary to demonstrate, even to the sincere prohibitionists (a phrase that does not include such organizations as the Anti-Saloon League), its unenforcibility, and to impress its obnoxiousness on the people generally. Smith's position thus appears as the only one that is free from hypocrisy and that should really satisfy both parties to the controversy.

Washington, D. C. A. D. GARMAN.

SIR: I, too, am a North Carolinian, and, in the light of much hearsay, I welcome T. W. Lingle's survey (issue of September 19) to show that the keeping of liquor away from the Negro was not the dominating motive in the dryness of North Carolina. It is a question of opinion as to the nation's convictions in 1917-18, but the fact of the arid atmosphere in North Carolina then will, I believe, be borne out by a perusal of the facts. The rebuke to New Republic correspondent and observer in such facts is well taken.

To impugn the motives of even ardent prohibitionists is as liable to error as it is incapable of objective verification. What is more, it seems logically out of order to invoke historical and psychological motives, however unpraiseworthy they may be thought to be, of prohibitionists as valid reasons for reform of the Eighteenth Amendment. The New Republic may not realize the ordinary man's custom of confusing the two when his habits and convictions are at stake.

I am sure some change of front has come about in North Carolina since 1918. Insufficient to make the state wet, but a change. Neither—and I do not say Dr. Lingle claims it is—neither is the fact that such North Carolina modification is traceable largely to metropolitan influence a valid reason for opposition to reform in the prohibition laws.

What comes to me, as a member of the "younger generation," is that we have a social situation with which we are not coping entirely successfully, but that most of our arguments and rebukes and counter-charges are methodological rather than pertinent to the issue. Such things as psychological motives, geneses, and attitudes, religious views, personalities, and party loyalties threaten to swing votes among even the intelligent electorate. If we cannot avoid such logically irrelevant arguments and assumptions, we can at least attempt to clear them up.

At the present time, on the prohibition issue, I would vote for Smith. On positive economic, sociological, and political grounds, I see the call for alteration in the Eighteenth Amendment. The explicit views of the candidates leave me no choice save for Smith. Would it be too much to ask the progressives in both parties, and in none, to avoid the fringes in seeking to vote intelligently?

D. BENTON WHARTON.

Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

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Governor Smith vs. the Democratic Party

SIR: Your contention that progressives should support Alfred E. Smith, the Democratic nominee for President, is so logical that no progressive is likely to question it so far as Governor Smith personally is concerned; but support to Smith cannot be given without supporting the Democratic party; and, "aye, there's the rub."

The progressives of Utah, in conference, have agreed that in Alfred E. Smith they have a progressive champion; and that they desire to support him whole-heartedly and enthusiastically. They have further agreed that only when the Democrats make definite pledges and give positive guarantees upon progressive principle and policy, can they give the united, enthusiastic support they have and hold.

May I suggest that following your articles on why progressives should support Alfred E. Smith, and thereby the Democratic party, you run some telling why the Democratic nominee and party should support the progressives?

The Progressive party of Utah has adopted a "Declaration of Principle and a Platform of Policy," and they are concerned about having that principle and policy vitalized in government, more than they are about helping individuals to get elected to office. Our Democratic leaders and office-seekers seem not to realize that fact, and again, "aye, there's the rub."

Would that the liberal forces of the nation could be unitedly massed behind the leadership of Alfred E. Smith. If that is done, they surely will march to victory this fall. If it is not done, I believe it will be because the Democratic party organization lacks vision, is not sufficiently progressive, and, therefore, must assume responsibility for the defeat that surely will come.

E. A. MITCHELL,
Progressive State Chairman.

Provo, Utah.

Reappearing Voters

SIR: As I read Mr. Bliven's articles, which give such a refreshing, almost anagrammatic picture of the cross work of politics, I watched for him to say something about that large body of qualified voters who are rarely stimulated to go to the polls. I believe the National Civic Federation has estimated their peace strength at 40,000,000 in 1926. And in the New Republic you published an article, "The Vanishing Voter," that stated that there were about 60 percent of the qualified voters that go to the polls nowadays.

Mr. Bliven pointed out that in the present campaign there are certain factors that throw more doubt than usual into the election—religion, prohibition and agricultural distress. Two of these factors are charged with a high emotional voltage which may be potent enough to make many qualified wet voters stagger to the polls and many delinquent drys hitch up their camels for aridity's sake. If only half of the 40,000,000 listless electorate go to the polls, might they not do more than merely offset each other's votes?

This slight contribution to the parlor political game, I hope, will not startle the delinquent voters and thereby add to the burdens of the conscientious workers at the polls..

MARSHALL BEUICK.

New York City.

The Negative Ballot

SIR: The evident boredom of the sovereign people in face of a choice between Hoover and Smith and Thomas and Varney, and the elaborate effort of the New Republic to "kid" itself into the conviction that to vote for Al is to vote *against* Hoover and thus to smite privilege and reaction, move me to renew a suggestion I made four years ago when a similar academic question was being labored by the press. . . .

The scandalously low percentage of citizens whom the excitements of democracy stimulate to exercise of their right to suffrage—a condition which causes such anxiety among those vestals who keep an underwriter's eye on the sacred flame of liberty—may be due to nothing more serious than a slight defect in our balloting system arising from a mere oversight in our election laws. These laws, it is astonishing to note, fail in any way to define in what the exercise of the right of suffrage consists—to say what, indeed, "voting" means. Attempts to reform the electoral system by such methods as the direct primary and the proportional ballot have failed somehow to improve matters because they have missed a vital point, namely, that it may be far more in the interest of the voter and a far more genuine exercise of the right of suffrage, to vote *against* some candidate than to vote for any of them, or even to nominate some. Yet our election laws tacitly assume that voting can only mean voting *for* somebody, and they make no provision, as every well regulated club does, and as even the ancient Greek Republics did, for a negative expression of the popular will.

Now it is obvious that no expression of opinion by voters through the ballot can be fair, accurate or effective if the voter is permitted only to indicate his preference for Tweedledum or Tweedledee, or for some other candidate for whom not enough votes can possibly be cast to achieve election. The people who vote for Mr. Smith because they suspect that Mr. Hoover is Mrs. Grundy in pants, or who vote for Mr. Hoover because they believe that Al is Beëlzebub in a brown derby, are not expressing themselves at all; and most of those who are not content with that kind of political Katharsis go to a movie or a noisie on election day and forget it. In modern democracy you pay your money anyway, but you do not have to take your choice. Yet in such cases it is nearly always possible for the cantankerous citizen to find one candidate in the bunch upon whom he would, be it ever so slightly, prefer to bestow the raspberry of his scorn. Indeed, the blackball from days immemorial has been an essential equipment of democracy. If it still were so under our voting laws, how many electoral slackers would come to the polls for the first time with a trace of pleasure! . . .

If the voter is not able to pump up much enthusiasm for any candidate, as has regularly been his misfortune since the exciting days of Professor Wilson, when we were naïvely voting for or against democracy as we are now for or against strong drink—and especially if their platforms are equivocal, indifferent or meaningless, he should be allowed at least to register his protest against political desuetude by casting his black bean against the biggest cipher on the ballot. Negative voting would not cure all the evils of our electoral system, but it would put into the electorate's hands a weapon which most politicians would respect or fear far more than they do the prevailing protest by silence. After a few stuffed shirts of the majority parties had thereby had their majorities reduced by subtraction of the votes cast against them, our party politics would again begin to live and breathe. . . . The veto is just as necessary to popular government as the vote. We cannot ever hope to get our best man for an absurd office like the presidency, but we might, under the negative ballot, some time get the least incompetent or the least ridiculous. . . .

VIRGIL JORDAN.

New York City.

Negro Segregation in Washington

SIR: I entered upon the classified service of the government as result of a competitive examination in 1884, and served throughout Grover Cleveland's first administration. At that time, I should say that 10 percent of the clerks in the bureau where I served were Negroes. There was no hint or suggestion of segregation on account of race. As the feeling against the Negro in general developed, it was reflected inside of the departments. This went on gradually until it became quite generally felt and understood under the administration of President Taft. Shortly after the inauguration of President Wilson, the matter received official

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sanction. Negro clerks were given orders as to separate lavatory and other departmental facilities. Signs were posted about the buildings to this effect. These orders were always verbal, never written. It was believed that President Wilson had let it be understood that such orders would not meet with his disfavor. However, not all the cabinet members countenanced segregation in their departments. It is known that Secretary Garrison pointedly refused to do so.

Mr. William Monroe Trotter, the militant editor of The Guardian, headed a delegation which complained to the President that this practice was undemocratic and un-American, and imposed undeserved humiliation upon patriotic and loyal American citizens. The public press widely advertised the interview at the time and sided with Mr. Trotter rather than President Wilson. As a result of the protest of Mr. Trotter and the widespread disapproval of public opinion, the segregation provisions of the several departments were modified to the extent of removing all signs and placards for the guidance of Negro employees. But segregation remained as a rule which Negro employees were given to understand must be obeyed. It remained in full force and effect under the administrations of Presidents Harding and Coolidge. The same Mr. Trotter headed a delegation to President Coolidge in August, 1926, and presented a petition bearing tens of thousands of signatures, protesting against the invidious practice. The writer was a member of this delegation. President Coolidge promised the committee that he would take up the matter complained of and put an end to it in his own way and time. But up to the present hour he has found neither the way nor the time, so far as has been publicly disclosed.

Thus the matter stood until the presidential primaries got under way. Secretary Hoover was the popular candidate, against the wishes of the old-line politicians. He had ventured to launch his candidacy before the voters of Ohio. The regular line-up was against him, and Ohio was the pivotal state. It so happened that the Negro voters of that state had become dissatisfied with the old party bosses and were eager to line up with any well planned revolt. A Negro Hoover delegate was pitted against no less a celebrity than Senator Fess, who stood with the orthodox faction. Hearing that segregation existed in the Department of Commerce, presided over by Mr. Hoover, his managers were put on notice that unless this grievance was remedied, he need not hope to make any effective appeal to the Negro voters. Upon the strength of this protest, Mr. Hoover had segregation abolished in the Department of Commerce and in the Census Office, which comes under the jurisdiction of that department. Of course, he was playing politics, as all politicians do when it is necessary to obtain votes. Mr. Hoover won the nomination. Whatever effect this little political game may have contributed to the general result, the nominee has no reason to be ashamed of it. It was politics which pointed in the direction of fair play and equal opportunity.

It might be mentioned in this connection that Secretary Work, who was Mr. Hoover's pre-convention manager and is now Chairman of the Republican National Committee, was strongly urged to abolish segregation in the Interior Department, over which he presided. He stoutly refused to do so at first, but after further insistence by the local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, he yielded under the persuasive influence of good politics. When Secretary Mellon, who was not at the time under political pressure, was confronted with the same protest, he banished the whole subject of segregation by a blanket denial. He boldly stated that no segregation existed in the Treasury Department. This reminds one of denying that there are five fingers on the hand, by not counting the thumb.

Mr. Hoover's managers are now anxious to build up a "lily white" following in the Southern states. His anti-segregation order is rising up to plague him. The Bourbon Democrats, in their turn, are now playing politics with the segregation issue. They wish to stir up Southern resentment by virtue of this order. Uneasy lies the politician's head that would wear a crown. He will be damned if he does and damned if he doesn't. If Mr. Hoover openly avows this anti-segregation order as being indicative of his statesmanlike policy of dealing with all qualified employees of the government, without distinction or discrimination on account of race, he will possibly frighten away his much-desired white reënforcement. If he disavows it, he will certainly offend his Negro supporters in the North. This is to be the test of the genuine Hoover character. Does he mean it when he says that he stands for equal opportunity for all American citizens without regard to faith or color?

KELLY MILLER.

Howard University, Washington, D. C.

An Economic Council

SIR: In view particularly of the "economic council" movement in other countries, the representative character of "an official committee," appointed this year by the governor of Oregon under authority of the legislature "to make a thorough study and recommendations concerning a state building code" to the legislature, is significant. The committee is composed of one member from the legislature, "one citizen at large from eastern Oregon," "one citizen at large from southern Oregon, one member of the state board of health, and one member of the Oregon or Portland branch of each of the following organizations, selected from names recommended by the organization: the Oregon State Federation of Labor, the Associated General Contractors of America, the American Institute of Architects, the Oregon Technical Council, the Oregon Building Congress, the Oregon League of Building and Loan and Savings and Loan Associations, the Pacific Northwest Real Estate Association, the Oregon Insurance Rating Bureau, and the Oregon Manufacturers Association. According to Senator A. W. Norblad, one of the authors of the resolution for the creation of the committee, it is "purely an Oregon invention."

JAMES D. BARNETT.

University of Oregon, Eugene, Ore.

No Inadvertence

SIR: In his statement withdrawing the warrant for the arrest of Dr. Horace M. Kallen on the charge of blasphemy uttered at the Sacco-Vanzetti memorial meeting in Boston, August 24, Municipal Judge Michael J. Murray said: "The language employed may have been used inadvertently in the heat of an earnest argument." The language referred to was: "If Sacco and Vanzetti were anarchists, Jesus Christ was an anarchist. If Sacco and Vanzetti were anarchists, St. Francis de Assisi was an anarchist, Giordano Bruno was an anarchist, Thomas Jefferson was an anarchist, Abraham Lincoln was an anarchist."

When Dr. Kallen read Judge Murray's statement he immediately wired me the following comment, which was sent to all newspapers in Boston but not printed by them: "I made the reference to Jesus intentionally with premeditated purpose. I see a resemblance between His story and that of Sacco and Vanzetti. If I had associated His name with Lowell, Thayer or Fuller, that might have been blasphemy."

GARDNER JACKSON.

Boston, Mass.

Problems in Human Physiology

SIR: I should be personally very grateful—and many other lay students of human physiology would also, I think—if one of your medical readers would kindly indicate the remaining outstanding problems of physiology awaiting solution by research. Among the number with which most people are familiar are the causation of cancer, the formation of the blood-corpuscles and the phenomena of the cicatrice. But there must be many others upon which research work is now being concentrated. A list of the more intelligible would enable lay readers to follow the research with interest to themselves and possibly with profit to the professional students.

AN ENQUIRER.

New York City.

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Two Diaries

The Travel Diaries of William Beckford, Edited by Guy Chapman. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. Two vols. 721 pages. $12.50.

The Diaries of Sylvester Douglas, Lord Glenbervie, Edited by Francis Bickley. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. Two vols. 833 pages. $12.50.

THESE two journals, emanating from the same period, competently edited and beautifully dressed, solicit the reader on quite different grounds. In Beckford's narrative of his travels the interest is chiefly because of the author of "The History of the Caliph Vathek." In Glenbervie's commentary the interest lies in the men, women, events and manners of which he was a well placed spectator.

In the "Travel Diaries" Mr. Chapman has included the letters written while Beckford was on his grand tour, 1780-81; the sketches of Spain and Portugal dating from 1787; and an account of a visit to the monasteries of Alcobaça and Batalha, which took place in 1794. The history of these works is set forth by the editor in a prefatory memoir, which tells about all that can be certainly known of their author. William Thomas Beckford was born in 1760, the son of a London merchant who became Lord Mayor. His father, dying in 1770, left him the estate of Fonthill Abbey and a fabulous fortune. When nineteen, Beckford became deeply attached to William Courtenay, afterward Earl of Devon, then a boy of eleven. The portrait of the latter by Romney shows a lad of extraordinary beauty. Mr. Chapman does not believe that the connection was criminal; but it soon became notorious. Beckford addressed the letters of 1780-81 to Courtenay, but retained them or kept copies for publication, which nearly took place under the title "Dreams, Waking Thoughts and Incidents," in 1783. Apparently Beckford's reputation was already such that even the most harmless public appearance was indiscreet. At all events, his friends and Courtenay's persuaded him to withhold the edition, of which all but five copies were destroyed in 1801. In the year 1783, Beckford married, entered Parliament and began to seek a peerage; but little more than a year later, he fled from England to avoid the consequences of a scandal which Mr. Chapman thinks he could have faced down. His chief place of refuge was Portugal; but he returned to England, and enjoyed a kind of succession to Horace Walpole in the Romantic Movement, "Vathek" being something beyond "The Castle of Otranto" in romance, as Fonthill Abbey went beyond Strawberry Hill in Gothic extravagance. In 1834 Beckford published his travel letters, and in 1835 "The Recollections of an Excursion to the Monasteries of Alcobaça and Batalha."

It is impossible to find in the first series of letters any reason for their original suppression. They are pleasantly descriptive of the Low Countries, the Rhine, Switzerland and Italy, with the romantic coloring of the time. The accounts of Spain and Portugal are readable enough. The "Recollections," written in 1835, from notes and memory, however, show Beckford as a mature and realistic observer and narrator, with something of the raciness of George Borrow.

In Glenbervie's diaries the interest is as objective as in Beckford's it is subjective. No one knows or cares who Glenbervie was, apart from the record which he has left. That record, however, though far less than in the case of Pepys, establishes him as a personality. The son of a poor Scotch laird, he made his way at the bar in London, and at the age of forty-five married the daughter of Lord North. With this connection he looked for advancement to political patronage, especially to his fellow Scotchman, Henry Dundas, who was in the ministry of Pitt, the Younger. The Diary begins in 1793, when Glenbervie received his first important appointment as Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and continues in intermittent fashion down to 1819. There is no doubt, as Mr. Bickley observes, that the writer saw himself at the beginning of an important career, and thought the account of it would be agreeable reading for himself and his descendants. He was disappointed in the career, though he carefully notes the stages of place-hunting by which he arrived at a number of fairly lucrative but not distinguished positions. He must have had some capacity in affairs and assuredly a considerable social gift, for he imposed himself on the successive governments, dined everywhere and knew everybody. He achieved membership in the Club, though long after Johnson's day; and Lady Glenbervie became one of the ladies-in-waiting to the Princess of Wales. He had the curiosity of Boswell, and the opportunity to satisfy it of Wilfrid Blunt. He had the Scotchman's pride in knowledge and zest in retailing it. His style is dry and literal, and there are *longueurs* in his narrative, in spite of Mr. Bickley's surgery; but he is a genuine diarist.

It is worthy of note that although the years of the diary were those of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, Glenbervie shows little emotion at the world-shaping events about him. He has now and then a perfunctory expression of pity for the country, when matters were going badly; some enthusiasm over Admiral Jervis' victory; considerable curiosity as to the cause of Pitt's retirement from office in 1801, leaving the way open for the Peace of Amiens—but no cursing of the crimes of the Jacobins or the insatiable ambition of Napoleon. Glenbervie was a realist. He never took seriously the possibility of invasion. He was not alarmed at the threat of Napoleon's European system. He enjoyed the scandals of French revolutionary society next to those of his own monarchy—and tells with gusto of Mme. Fontenay's part as mistress and wife of Tallien and mistress of Barras, in mitigating the rigors of the Terror. He cites as a current belief thus early in the century that the prince called Louis Napoleon, known as the son of Louis Bonaparte and Hortense Beauharnais, was in reality the son of Napoleon himself, by his lovely step-daughter.

Scandal is, indeed, the breath of life of this chronicle. The Glenbervies were people of the utmost respectability, and though the Baron hints at certain minor indiscretions of his own, he adored his wife. Nevertheless, they dwelt like Lot and his family in the midst of Sodom. It would be a matter for a genealogist to compute how many noble families of today would bear the bar sinister if the tales current among Glenbervie's contemporaries were true. Glenbervie brings home a sense of the immense difference to society which means of contraception have made. In his day a physician told of being called in the morning to attend a great lady in her illicit pains, and seeing her in the evening as hostess, presiding at a formal dinner. A midwife told of being fetched by a gentleman to attend a lady who remained heavily veiled, but getting sight of her face, she watched for her on public occasions, and finally recognized her as the Princess Elizabeth. The beautiful Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, was reputed to have had a child by Lord Grey. Lady Harriet Townshend fell in love with a certain Captain Manby, only to be told by

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her father that Manby was her brother. An anecdote which Glenbervie relates needs no comment.

> Lady Salisbury is said by the scandalous chronicle to have had a child by a Mr. Hales of Hertfordshire. A gentleman was saying one day near the time when the report was most current, to her bosom friend, the Dowager Lady Essex, that he wondered Lady Salisbury could have liked so plain and vulgar a man, when her friend Lady Essex replied, "That is all a mistake. She never liked him. It was a mere surprise. They had been hunting (a diversion Lady Salisbury was formerly much addicted to). The chase was long and Hales being accidentally up with Lady Salisbury when it was over, they returned home together in a hack chaise. That was all. So you see it was all a surprise."

Glenbervie's appetite for scandal was nearly sated by the gossip of the Princess of Wales in regard to her family, and he was more than once moved to expressions of disgust and horror. The Princess assured him that all the supposed children of George I were Count Königsmarck's offspring. She told Lady Glenbervie that the King, her uncle and father-in-law, George III, when dining with her alone, had attacked her so violently that she barely escaped being ravished. "Alas! Alas! for Human Nature!" exclaims Glenbervie. She said she had it from the Duke of Kent that the Duke of Cumberland was the father of the Princess Sophia's child. "How horrid," is the diarist's comment. That he did not receive these revelations at the same value is shown by the solemn injunction attached to the bit of undersigned testimony which the Princess offered to Lady Glenbervie in regard to the birth of "Little Wille," whom she brought up as her son. "This is a secret that must be at least a century old before it ought to be whispered, and I give my son that solemn caution if ever this part of this journal shall fall under his eyes."

The domestic danger to the kingdom impressed Glenbervie much more than the foreign—the king mad, the Prince of Wales seeking a divorce and already secretly married to a Catholic, the five royal dukes, his brothers, standing threateningly about the young Princess Charlotte, who was presumptive heir to the throne. He quotes the Duke of Clarence, according to common report, as saying, "Do you think that I and my brothers will ever suffer that girl to wear the crown?" The horror of a disputed succession and civil war had returned to plague the sleep of the bourgeoisie, and the loosening of social bonds among the aristocracy, as during the Regency in France a century earlier, seemed to prophesy dire evil. Of one characteristic of the English Regency Glenbervie serves to remind us. As during the Restoration, vice was without imagination or charm, wit or grace—coarse, factual, brutal. It was this quality which accounted for the ease with which the Victorian reaction cleansed it or drove it to cover.

It must not be thought that Glenbervie's diaries are entirely a *chronique scandaleuse*. There are sympathetic pictures of his own unblemished domestic life. The account of the family tour through Europe after the French War presents the cosmopolitan background which Thackeray knew so thoroughly. Glenbervie had little use for the romantic colors of Beckford; he took his landscape, pictures and churches much as did his countryman, Tobias Smollett. On the Continent as at home, his chief interest was in people. It is as a social, not a personal document, that his diaries will remain an important addition to the records of their time.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

A Poet of Broadway

The Wild Party, by Joseph Moncure March. New York: Covici Friede. 114 pages.

MR. LOUIS UNTERMEYER'S instinct has served him well on this occasion. He has written a letter, which prefaces "The Wild Party," commending it to the publisher. Pascal Covici, however, has apparently been afraid of the censorship, and has brought "The Wild Party" out in a limited and privately circulated edition. This is a pity, because I am inclined to believe that this narrative poem of New York night-life is one of the most interesting pieces of verse of the year.

Mr. Untermeyer says, in his foreword, that he is not sure whether "The Wild Party" "is poetry at all," and it is true that Mr. March has written in a *genre* of his own. In the first place, "The Wild Party" is quite an effective realistic short story—unlike many narratives in verse, really well told: in the development of incident and the management of detail, Mr. March has shown a good deal of technical skill. A vaudeville dancer, of rudimentary intelligence and fabulous sex-appeal, becomes bored with her comedian-blackguard lover and persuades him to give a party. The party is presented on a large scale, though everything is made subordinate and contributory to the central drama. The golden-haired Queenie's red-haired running-mate brings a strange young man, a gentleman: Queenie makes an immediate play for him, pretending bruised innocence when the young man makes his first advances. The party, however, soon passes into a state of phantasmagoric drunkenness, and a man from across the way threatens to call the police if the revellers don't make less noise. Somebody retorts with a wisecrack, and the party becomes worse than ever. Queenie, who has looked to the young man like a golden-haired princess in a fairy tale, now presents herself under a different aspect; then she and the young man, both enveloped in a drunken nimbus, disappear together. When the comedian-lover, who has passed out, comes to in the early morning, he finds them in the next room. He pulls a gun: the young man jumps up, gets the revolver from him, and in a drunken struggle shoots the comedian.

> A crash!—
> The chair:
> He almost fell.
> "Chris'," he mumbled: "what th' hell—?
> "Jes's Christ!—I've hurt my shin:—"
>
> The door sprang open
> And the cops rushed in.

It is true that Mr. March writes like a very young man. At moments, we think that his characters are the banal types of melodrama. Then we see that, despite the banality of the language in which he sometimes describes them, they are the creations of a genuine poetic imagination working upon the results of a fresh first-hand observation of human behavior.

"The Wild Party" has, as I say, the design of a short story in prose. And it has also the language of prose. This is surprising, because it is written in a meter a little like something by Vachel Lindsay. But there is about March's style nothing of the rhapsodic or ecstatic quality which we should expect from a jazz technique. His language runs vividly and rapidly, despite the feebleness or cheapness of many individual phrases; but it leaves an im-

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pression rather of sobriety, and even, at its best, of fastidiousness. The effect of combining this style with a free, highly syncopated verse is very curious. This is evidently what has struck Mr. Untermeyer; and I believe that it is a sign of Mr. March's originality and distinction.

I quote the passage which describes the culminating point of the mounting excitement of the evening, Mr. March's sole excursion into lyrical rhetoric, which seems to me fairly successful—despite the fact that, taken out of its context, its faults appear much more clearly than when it is read as the climax of a drama in whose characters we have been made to believe.

> Some love is fire: some love is rust:
> But the fiercest, cleanest love is lust.
> And their lust was tremendous. It had the feel
> Of hammers clanging; and stone; and steel:
> And torches of the savage, roaring kind
> That rip through iron, and strike men blind:
> Of long trains crashing through caverns under
> Gray trembling streets, like angry thunder:
> Of engines throbbing; and hoarse steam spouting;
> And feet tramping; and great crowds shouting.
> A lust so savage, they could have wrenched
> The flesh from bone, and not have blenched.

This is followed immediately by a description of the studio at the dead end of the evening:

> The curtains shivered with a sudden chill:
> They stirred a little on the window sill;
> Then billowed, and flapped inward
> Blown
> By a wind that smelled of damp stone. . . .
>
> The Victrola played steadily.
> Beside it sat
> A white-faced youth, with a battered hat
> Aslant on his frowsy, dishevelled head.
> Obviously, he wished he were dead.
> He sat hunched over, staring at the wall
> With eyes that saw no wall at all.
> With half of one large foot he kept
> The music's rhythm.
> He wept.
> The record played on.
> Each time it ended,
> He would look up startled; greatly offended
> He would then rise
> With streaming eyes.
> Carefully,
> With a face of pain,
> He would start the same tune over again.

Mr. March is perhaps the first New York writer who has tried seriously to bring Broadway—the Broadway of the underworld, of the night-clubs and the theater—into literature. The popular melodrama called "Broadway" had, in its dialogue, though not in its story, a certain amount of literary interest. But I do not recall any other attempt to do the sort of thing which Mr. March has done. It is a pity that so many of the good writers are hopelessly addicted to Greenwich Village or to Paris. There ought to be, in the Forties and the Fifties, material as rich for the poet as, to have recourse to the inevitable phrase, in Elizabethan England. A new book by Mr. March has been announced for the fall, and we should look forward to it with interest.

EDMUND WILSON.

"I Am the Prison"

Condemned to Devil's Island: The Biography of an Unknown Convict, by Blair Niles. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 376 pages. $3.

THE convict ships of England no longer anchor in Botany Bay or in the shadow of the Virginia capes; the convict trains of the Imperial government no longer groan eastward along the Trans-Siberian; the sentence of deportation has almost disappeared from modern criminology. Only the French, the most advanced and most conservative of European nations, the most checkered with justice and injustice, continue to send their yearly cargoes of six or seven hundred prisoners to Guiana, to that somber colony which has borrowed a name from Devil's Island.

The climate there is so deadly to Europeans that half of the convicts die during the first year of their term. Others, attempting to escape, are lost at sea or disappear forever in the jungle. Still others remain to be carried off by fever, dysentery, syphilis or scurvy; and even if they live to be released, they still must serve a term of exile equal in length to their term of imprisonment. No wonder that French criminals speak of Devil's Island as "the dry guillotine."

Blair Niles spent several months in French Guiana. She met the officials, visited most of the prisons, talked at length with the convicts. Having saturated her mind with their fauna and folk-lore, she has embodied all her researches in the story of an "unknown convict," a young Parisian deported for burglary. She describes his voyage, his sufferings in the colony, his rash escape, his recapture, his six months in solitary confinement. Finally she leaves him at the end of his prison sentence and the beginning of his exile, a little man in a cotton jacket staring at a tropical night-sky in which there gleams no star of hope.

Michel as she describes him is a rather sentimentalized figure. He weeps too frequently; he preserves a raw sensibility through hardships that are really too desperate for tears. Mrs. Niles, in attempting to describe the emotions, the dreams, the most intimate ambitions of a French convict, has undertaken a difficult task, too difficult even for a writer of her quick sympathies. Thus, her book is a partial failure; it is a failure in so far as it is fictionalized, but as a record of life in a penal colony it is magnificently rich.

It is rich with the sights and smells of the Guiana coast: the troops of howling monkeys, the palm-trees crowded with vultures, the sleek rivers, the odor of sweaty flannel, the graveyards sleeping under the bamboos. It is rich with episodes of prison life, with cruelty and vice, with stories of attempted escape by land or sea. It is rich with such actual characters as Dieudonné, the last survivor of Bonnot's famous band of anarchists, and the courageous Allut who attempted seven times to escape, under almost incredible difficulties. These are the heroes of Guiana; these and the admirable Roussenq, who was sentenced to deportation for a slight military offense, who spent twenty years in solitary confinement, who wrote a great poem on little scraps of paper, and who once declared to a visiting journalist:

"I am no longer a human being. For me humanity has ceased to exist. I am not now a man. Prison has entered into me. And I am the prison."

MALCOLM COWLEY.

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America and Poland

America and the New Poland, by H. H. Fisher. New York: The Macmillan Company. 403 pages. $3.50.

THAT the relations, sentimental, humanitarian and diplomatic, between America and Poland have been sufficiently extensive to justify a book of four hundred pages is just a little surprising. Diplomatic relations with France and Great Britain bulk so large in the early history of the United States that the rest of Europe is usually shuffled conveniently out of sight—Poland along with the rest of the Continent. Yet the Poles played an early part in the history of the Republic. Kosciuszko and Pulaski came, like Lafayette, to fight in the Revolution. Another Pole, Niemciewicz, became Washington's friend and—in these days not always the same thing—his biographer. Pulaski died of wounds received in action against the British. Kosciuszko lived to return to his own country and be wounded in the Polish struggle against Russia; and the poem about the shrieks emitted by a personified Freedom, on that unhappy occasion, were long familiar to many a Yankee district school.

The tie thus established between the two countries was sufficiently real to intensify the sympathies which the citizens of the young Republic naturally felt for the Poles after their liberties had been finally extinguished. Jefferson denounced the partition as a crime; and when in 1831 the Poles revolted, Americans sent funds which, arriving too late, could only be used for the relief of refugees. So bitter was the tone of the American press that the Russian government entered formal diplomatic protest.

Polish immigration, which began at this time, continued to increase in volume for the next seventy-five years. From these immigrants and their descendants came the Americans of Polish stock who, during the World War, created nearly a dozen relief organizations, added one unit to the Polish army, and gave about a hundred thousand men to the American forces. From them, too, came generous contributions to the work of Herbert Hoover and the American Relief Administration in Poland.

"The measures which Hoover and his associates put into effect," says Mr. Fisher, "were not conceived as cures that would restore the injured economic system to normal health, but as first aid treatment which would save the system from bleeding to death from its wounds." To this work the New Poland owes the lives of some millions of her citizens and Europe owes in part the turning back of the Bolshevist tide, which ebbed as soon as misery and starvation ended. Once the emergency was over, a fresh bond was established by Professor Edwin Kemmerer, whose "bitter medicine" stabilized Polish finance and thus saved Poland from a disaster that might have been even worse than the War's immediate aftermath. It is rather curious that Mr. Fisher spends no time in discussing another American professor's share in solving another Polish problem by that dubious political expedient, the Polish corridor. Perhaps he feels that the corridor is nothing for which the Poles need feel particularly grateful to America.

Such is the story that Mr. Fisher has to tell. To provide background, he summarizes with admirable concision and no less admirable adequacy the entire course of Polish history—in less than fifty pages; while he devotes nearly a hundred to events from 1914 to 1919, about two hundred to the post-war period, and about fifty pages to documents. Though this scale of proportion is calculated to shock the staid historians of an elder day, it has none of the glib cheapness of the popular "outline of everything." Mr. Fisher does skillfully what he sets out to do—explains intelligently the events of our own day with just enough of the past to make them intelligible. It is not the only way of writing history, but it is a very good way; and, thanks to the generous abundance of the Hoover War Library at Stanford University, the book is copiously documented.

JOHN BAKELESS.

Roast Beef and Pudding

When They Love, by Maurice Baring. New York: Doubleday Doran and Company. $2.50.

Another Country, by H. Du Coudray. New York: J. H. Sears and Company. $2.50.

Stampede, by L. de Giberne Sieveking. New York: Brentano's. $2.50.

The House with the Echo, by T. F. Powys. New York: The Viking Press. $2.

THESE books could never be mistaken for the work of American authors. Their flavor is unmistakably English, and—by now it may be added—foreign. Between English and American humor there is an ever-widening chasm; and American high seriousness, as it is best represented in the writing of today, has more in common with the Russians than with the English.

After such an assertion, Maurice Baring may seem a poor example to take, but really he is not. His manner, it is true, is more cosmopolitan than insular; he writes with that kind of sly naïveté which seems a combination of French tact and Russian candor; but at core he is British. "When They Love" is the story of a successful, middle-aged English writer who attempts to interfere between a young artist and a "light woman," because he likes and admires the young artist, and fears for his career. The attempt takes the form of weaning the light woman's affections to himself. He is happily married all this time, and has no intention of being false to his wife; the whole affair is to be a game between two well matched antagonists. The story, simply and movingly related, tells us what we all know but do not like to believe: that a clever man can be a terrible fool. Mr. Baring writes well, because he writes with great plainness; his stories have emotional force, because the emotion in them is indicated rather than expressed. Perhaps, if he were not an Englishman—but why rail at fate? If Mr. Baring makes no bulls-eyes, at least he hits the target.

"Another Country," the production of a young girl, won the prize offered for the best novel written last year by an undergraduate at Cambridge or Oxford. The book may be characterized by one of Oxford's favorite terms of praise—"sound." The book is sound. In America, precocious literary efforts usually run to something flashier, more amusing or more shocking; these are the accents of premature middle age. The hero's name is Charles, and he is "shy, stupid, short-sighted and ugly." He is second officer on a P. and O. liner, is left behind at Malta on account of illness, meets a family of Russians, falls in love with the governess, marries her (though he has a wife and children at home), is scared into deserting her. She learns the truth, comes to England, sees him, shoots herself. It is all quite plausible, conscientiously worked out, quietly (too quietly) told, the characters are disagreeable and true, and there are no hysterics, even at the

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end. It reminds one of Gissing. A depressing performance altogether, by one so young.

Perhaps Mr. Sieveking is not actually English—it is a queer name, in a nation of queer names—but his humor is as English as possible. That is to say, it is nonsensical, which can be either delightful or painfully silly. "Stampede" is neither one thing nor the other: it is partly satirical, partly a *reductio ad absurdum* of the detective story and the adventure story rolled into one, and it has gleams of lucid madness. " 'Infinity is another thing that will *have* to be eliminated,' said Kanker, 'and exemplification, and penumbras and obloquy, and eggs. . . .' " The story is illustrated by G. K. Chesterton in his liveliest vein. It would be an interesting experiment to try this book on a hardened reader of detective stories: he might be irritated; on the other hand, it might sharpen his palate.

If it were not for T. F. Powys' mystical moods, he would be comparable with Chekhov. When he becomes symbolistic, he is one of a crowd, but when he sticks to his muttons—the yokels of the English countryside—he is in a class almost by himself. "The House with the Echo" contains twenty-six very short stories, of which a half-dozen are first-class. His best characters—farmers, half-wits, sextons, oafs of various kinds—are as simple and mysterious as a clod of earth. He has the same happy faculty that Chekhov has, of telling just the right thing, with the barest economy, and leaving out everything else. The story called "The Lost Lady" is an excellent example. His humor has a mad, almost Celtic tang to it. But he must be quoted. "The Rev. Mr. Pine thought suicide a sad mistake. If he saw anyone that he fancied might be meditating self-destruction he would say, 'There may be apple jelly for breakfast tomorrow.' " "No one could possibly have had more troubles to tell of than Mr. Facey, and he would always remark, at the end of each tale of calamity, that he had an uncle in America who had forgotten him." When he makes you laugh, you roar, even if you roar silently; and when he tells you a tragic story, there is nothing more to be said.

T. S. MATTHEWS.

Fiction Notes

Nettle Harvest, by Sylvia Denys Hooke. New York: Doubleday Doran and Company. $2.

THIS is the kind of book which one compares with "Lolly Willowes," although it is anchored more solidly to earth than that bewitching fantasy. On her forty-fourth birthday, Miss Jane Parker, a prim and unimaginative old maid, decides that life has passed her by. Choosing a name at random from a railroad guide, she journeys to the village of Hobdingle in a belated search for adventure. There she becomes involved in the intimate affairs of all manner of exciting people, from the mildly mad Sylvanus Leaf to Gerald Crichton and his lovely, elfin child. But raw life is too much for Miss Parker. She retreats again to her sewing circles and her curates, shutting her door forever on "this nettle, danger." Unfortunately, one soon loses interest in the rather dull Miss Parker, so absorbing are the people of Hobdingle. Sylvia Denys Hooke offers one snatches of half a dozen enchanting tales, all of which are left incomplete. Nevertheless, "Nettle Harvest" is an ingratiating book, not so witty as its famous predecessor, but possibly more poignant, and written with the same delicate charm.

Mrs. Condover, by John Metcalfe. New York: Horace B. Liveright. $2.50.

EVEN an enterprising censor could find no concrete fault with "Mrs. Condover," and yet this sinister novel by John Metcalfe hints perpetually at dark obscenities. Kenneth Bly, an adolescent product of a London suburb, falls in love with a beautiful blind girl who is guarded jealously by her grim, fanatical mother. Mrs. Condover warns the unbelieving boy that Vera has a mania for men, but at the same time she presses him unscrupulously into an engagement. Innocent and enthralled, Kenneth does not divine the rottenness of the Condovers and their friends until he receives unmistakable proof that Vera had used him merely as an instrument for her greedy passions. One is never told the whole truth about any of the characters, but is permitted to form distinctly unpleasant guesses, and this deliberate reticence adds greatly to the book's power. Although its atmosphere is stifling and unhealthy, "Mrs. Condover" is an amazing *tour de force.*

Pigsties with Spires, by Georgina Garry. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.50.

IT is vastly to the credit of Georgina Garry that she handles an unusual theme without smirking proudly over her own daring. "Pigsties with Spires" is the story of Joseph Demayne, who, on the brink of middle age, deliberately becomes the kept mistress of a selfish and brutish man in order that she may have luxuries for herself and her little girl. A sensualist by nature, she enjoys a few passionate years, and then one watches her bitter, degrading struggle to keep her man—and above all, his money—in the face of advancing age. So desperate does she become that when he is attracted by the youth and beauty of her daughter, she is almost prepared to sacrifice the child to his indecent lust. Suicide, however, is her final solution. The book is crudely written, with no graces of style, but it makes Josephine Demayne almost intolerably real. Miraculously, Miss Garry has avoided melodrama and done an honest piece of work.

EDITH H. WALTON.

A Correction

In our issue of September 19, 1928, on page 123, the author of the poem, "The Stag," appears as HERBERT LEE COOK, through a typographical error. The author's correct name is HAROLD LEWIS COOK.

Contributors

CARLETON BEALS is a resident of Mexico, and was formerly Principal of the American High School in Mexico City. He is the author of "Mexico, an Interpretation," and other books.

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JOHN BAKELESS, editor of The Living Age, is the author of "Economic Causes of Modern War," and "The Origin of the Next War."

EDITH H. WALTON is on the staff of The Forum.

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